



GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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**GVMC
BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

8:30 a.m. November 1, 2012

Kent County Commission Chambers

- 1) Approval of October 2012 Minutes**
- 2) Moment of Silence in Remembrance of Mayor Robert May of Hastings**
- 3) Public Comments**
- 4) Financial Update**
- 5) Recommendations from the Personnel Committee on 2012/13 GVMC Officers & Executive Committee Appointments**
- 6) Summary of Executive Director Review & Evaluation**
- 7) Emerging Issues Update**
 - a) Jared Rodrigues – Update on West Michigan Policy Forum**
 - b) Erika Rosebrook – Governor Snyder’s Urban Initiatives**
- 8) Adjourn**

GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL

Board Meeting

October 8, 2012

10:30 a.m.

Prince Center – Calvin College
Grand Rapids

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chairman Jim Buck.

Members Present:

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Tom Butcher	Grand Valley State University
Richard Clanton	City of Kentwood
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Brian Donovan	City of East Grand Rapids
George Heartwell	City of Grand Rapids
Denny Hoemke	Algoma Township
Don Hilton, Sr.	Gaines Township
Jim Holtrop	Ottawa County
John Hoppough	City of Greenville
Mark Howe	City of Lowell
Rebecca Fleury	Village of Middleville
Elias Lumpkins, Jr.	City of Grand Rapids
George Meek	Plainfield Township
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
Audrey Nevins-Weiss	Byron Township
Michael Selden	City of Wayland
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Bill VerHulst	City of Wyoming
Patrick Waterman	City of Hudsonville

Members Absent:

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Dan Carlton	Georgetown Township
Jason Eppler	City of Ionia
Steve Grimm	Cannon Township

Brian Harrison	Caledonia Township
Doyle Hayes	At-Large Member
Carol Hennessey	Kent County
John Helmholdt	At-Large Member
Cindy Janes	Cascade Township
Robert May	City of Hastings
Mick McGraw	At-large Member
Cy Moore	Treasurer
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Jack Poll	City of Wyoming
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Milt Rohwer	City of Grand Rapids
Jim Saalfeld	Kent County
Toby VanEss	Tallmadge Township
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Roger Wills	City of Belding
Michael Young	City of Rockford

Others Present:

Chris Brown	Grand Valley Metro Council
David Czurak	Grand Rapids Business Journal
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Dal McBurrows	MDOT
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Brenda McNabb-Stang	City of Hastings
Stg. Tony Stein	Barry County
Sue Reyff	Village of Middleville
Peter Varga	ITP / The Rapid
Phil VanNoord	Village of Middleville
Steve Warren	Kent County Road Commission
John Weiss	Grand Valley Metro Council

2. Welcome

Chair Jim Buck welcomed some special guests including Sue Reyff, Phil VanNoord, and Stg. Tony Stein from Middleville.

3. Minutes

MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of the September GVMC Board Meeting. MOVE - Meek. SUPPORT – Nevins-Weiss. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Public Comments

None

5. Amendment of the GVMC Unified Work Program for ITP / The Rapid

Abed Itani explained the request for amendment to the Unified Work Program. It is being requested by ITP for a feasibility study on Lake Michigan Drive for \$600,000. The amendment has been approved by the Policy Committee.

MOTION – To Approve the Requested Amendment to the Unified Work Program for ITP. MOVE – Holtrop. SUPPORT – Donovan. MOTION CARRIED.

6. Board Schedule

John Weiss reviewed the GVMC meeting schedule for 2012/2013. The GVMC Board meetings in January, April, July and October will be held in conjunction with the Quarterly Luncheon's rather than on the first Thursday of the month. Legislative Committee meetings will be at the call of the Chair.

7. Legislative Report

Mike DeVries reported on the recommendation of the Legislative Committee to support ballot proposal #1 and oppose #5 & #6. The Legislative Committee did not have time to fully vet the remaining proposals.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposals.

MOTION – To Support Michigan Ballot Proposal #1 and Oppose Proposals # 5 & #6. MOVE – DeVries. SUPPORT – Howe. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION – To Oppose the Use of Special Amendments to the Michigan Constitution for Issues Which Could be Handled Through the Legislative Process. MOVE – Arends. SUPPORT – Nevins-Weiss. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION – To Oppose Michigan Ballot Proposals #2 & #3 Because They are Issues Which Should be Handled Through the Legislative Process. MOVE – Howe. SUPPORT – Nevins-Weiss. MOTION CARRIED.

8. Discussion w Attorney General Bill Schuette

9. Adjournment – 11:45 a.m.

Attorney General Bill Schuette at odds with Grand Rapids-area leaders on one Michigan ballot proposal



By [Matt Vande Bunte](#) | mvandebu@mlive.com

on October 08, 2012 at 3:40 PM, updated October 08, 2012 at 3:41 PM

[Email](#) | [Print](#)

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Attorney General Bill Schuette advocated a Yes vote on [Proposal 5](#) because “I’m for lowering taxes,” but his audience in Grand Rapids disagreed.

After hearing local government leaders [caution against amending the state constitution](#) for legislative purposes, and using that same argument to justify opposition to some other statewide proposals on next month’s ballot, Schuette at an afternoon luncheon Monday, Oct. 8 quickly rattled off his take on the idea to require a two-thirds vote of lawmakers to enact a tax increase.

“This is an initiative to restrain the Legislature from tax increases,” he said after the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council luncheon at Calvin College’s Prince Conference Center. “Michigan’s problem is taxes have been too high and (the government has spent too much money).

“This (Proposal 5) is a curb on that appetite.”

You can find an archived MLive chat and other information about Proposal 5 [here](#). While Schuette thinks it’s a good idea, [Gov. Snyder does not](#). Nor does the Metro Council, an intergovernmental planning organization involving municipalities in Kent County and elsewhere in the region.

Requiring a super-majority vote to enact a tax increase would create a super-minority power center in the Legislature that also could block efforts to cut taxes, notes John Weiss, the council’s executive director.

“One hundred thirty-five elected officials can say one thing and 13 (senators) can stop it (if Proposal 5 passes),” he said.

Schuette’s take on other ballot initiatives:

--Proposal 1, vote Yes because the state has to be able to appoint emergency financial managers in distressed Michigan cities to make sure “we get it right.”

--Proposal 2, vote No because putting collective bargaining rights in the constitution “would be an economic strait jacket for our state.”

--Proposal 3, vote No because existing renewable energy targets in Michigan were set the way policy making is taught in “the old civics textbook” and “that’s the way we ought to do that,” he said. “Let’s not mess with and clutter up the constitution.”

Schuette also advocated a No vote on Proposal 4, and called Proposal 6 “complicated.”

Prior to the luncheon, Schuette sat in on the Metro Council board’s monthly meeting and shared some thoughts on medical marijuana, fireworks, prisons and Mitt Romney’s presidential campaign, which he co-chairs in Michigan.

He couched his remarks in the context of a “new Michigan” culture in which he believes “less rules, less regulation, less taxes, less government” will yield “more jobs and more paychecks.”

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'Ridiculous' ballot proposal on tax increases keeps getting blasted by West Michigan opponents



By [Zane McMillin | zmcmilli@mlive.com](mailto:zmcmilli@mlive.com)

on October 10, 2012 at 3:26 PM, updated October 10, 2012 at 3:40 PM

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Meijer Corp. President Mark Murray talks during a press conference Wednesday, Oct. 10, in Grand Rapids. Murray joined, from his left, Steve Heacock of Spectrum Health, Grand Valley Metro Council President John Weiss, Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell and Rick Baker, president of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, in urging a "no" vote on the statewide Proposal 5 ballot initiative. Zane McMillin | MLive.com

GRAND RAPIDS, MI — Perhaps not intending to sound catty, Steve Heacock, senior vice president for community relations of Spectrum Health, nonetheless let a wry sentiment roll off his tongue at a Wednesday press conference.

Heacock, in the middle of explaining his opposition to a statewide ballot proposal that would require a two-thirds supermajority vote among lawmakers for any new taxes, took aim at the very people whose power he would like to maintain.

“The requirement of a two-thirds vote in this Legislature, frankly, is ridiculous,” Heacock said. “I’m not certain we could get two-thirds of them to agree that it’s Wednesday today.”

Still, that statement illustrated what Heacock and others at the morning’s press conference at the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council headquarters in Grand Rapids said would be a dangerous policy that would institute minority rule in the statehouse.

Proposal 5 has been [derided by Gov. Rick Snyder](#), businesses, commerce groups and the heads of multiple municipalities in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 6 election.

Funded largely by the Moroun family, owners of the Ambassador Bridge between Detroit and Canada, [Proposal 5's proponents argue](#) it would keep policymakers on a short leash when it comes to tax increases.

“It cuts off the politicians’ ability to raise our taxes and requires government to live within its budget — just like Michigan families have to do,” Matthew Moroun wrote in a newspaper ad earlier this year.

At Wednesday’s press conference, Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell took a swipe at billionaire Manuel “Matty” Moroun, the 85-year-old Moroun family patriarch, calling him “a single rich guy” trying to preserve his self-interests.

Heartwell warned if Proposal 5 passes, the burden of raising taxes would fall to cities.

He gestured at times to two charts behind the speakers attempting to show the ability of 13 lawmakers among the state's 148 to hold up tax increases, should the proposal pass.

“From a municipal perspective, we’re concerned about the state not being able to generate the revenues it needs to support transportation, for example,” Heartwell said, “to support the great highway infrastructure that we have in the state of Michigan.”

Meijer Corp. President Mark Murray, a former Michigan budget director under Michigan Gov. John Engler, joined Heartwell and Heacock at the press conference.

Murray pointed to Gov. Rick Snyder’s corporate income tax changes that dissolved the widely unpopular Michigan Business Tax, arguing the measure helped give Michigan a competitive edge in attracting business.

“So 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30, 40, 50, 60 years from now, as things change, as the economy changes, as the need to be competitive changes, as other states change their tax policy, we’ll have handcuffs on ours,” Murray said, “and we’ll be unable to make the kinds of changes that we need to make.”

Zane McMillin may be reached through [email](#) and [Twitter](#).