

**Grand Valley Metro Council
Executive Committee Meeting**

Thursday, December 16, 2004
12:00 PM

Grand Valley Metro Council
40 Pearl NW, Suite 410
Grand Rapids, MI

MINUTES

Present

Jim Beelen	City of Allendale
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Don Hilton	Gaines Township
Kurt Kimball	City of Grand Rapids
Cy Moore	Council Treasurer
Sandy Frost Parrish	Cascade Township
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker

Other

Andy Bowman	Grand Valley Metro Council
Leon Branderhorst	Grand Valley Metro Council
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 by Chair Jim Buck.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November Executive Committee meeting were reviewed

MOTION – To approve the November 2004 minutes of the GVMC Executive Committee Meeting. MOVE – Delabbio. SUPPORT – VerHeulen. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Amendment to GVMC Articles of Incorporation to Include Membership for the City of Wyoming

Jim Buck reported that Wyoming has voted to join the Metro Council. Mr. Buck thanked everyone who was involved in the effort.

MOTION – To move the amendment adding Wyoming to the Metro Council to the agenda of the January 2005 GVMC Board Meeting. MOVE – Root. SUPPORT – Kimball. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Transportation

Abed Itani reported that Peter Varga would like to make a presentation on the corridor study to the January GVMC Board. He would like GVMC support for the project which currently does not have funding, but has been put on the illustrative list by the Policy Committee. It would be a symbolic gesture showing the FHA it is a priority for the region.

Jim Buck stated that Birgit Klohs from the Right Place is also slated to give a presentation on that date and she will be first on the agenda.

5. REGIS Update

Don Stypula reported they were making good progress on the new platform and migration. He said Andy Bowman is doing a great job stabilizing and directing the department. Mr. Stypula stated that some members feel the re-think of REGIS is going too slow, while others think it is going too fast. There is another Users group meeting coming up next Monday and a Tech meeting the following week to test the concept.

Andy Bowman reported that they are trying to avoid characterizing the re-think as centralized or decentralized. Not everyone will start to pull their information off of the REGIS servers. The new design will give members the ability to connect up to different servers and still get the same amount of analysis. A lot of users are not utilizing the system's current capabilities.

Al VanderBerg stated that once REGIS is reorganized and stable, we could link Ottawa County through Arc 9 and could even link other counties, depending on their systems.

Don Stypula reported Ada, Belding, and Greenville are all interested in REGIS.

6. Legislative Update: Wrap-up of Lame Duck Session; Look Ahead to 2005

Don Stypula reported that the new legislators are mostly radical conservatives and are setting the course for 2005.

Scott Hummel will probably get the Chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee.

Revenue Sharing is likely to be targeted again, and local government doesn't have the political juice to fight it off. Tough times are ahead and there are different dynamics now.

Kurt Kimball stated that the Governor recently stated her resolve to protect higher education. That could increase the risk to local government also.

Local governments need to make sure everyone sticks together in support of the issue. If there is a dissenting voice, it will take away from the message.

7. Update on Citizens Research Council Surveys

Don Stypula handed out a copy of the proposed surveys by the Citizens Research Council. The surveys should begin arriving the first or second week of January. The surveys are being pushed by Senator Sikkema, the Department of Treasury, and the Governor.

Jim Beelen questioned if the information was going to be based on calendar or fiscal years.

Don Stypula stated it was on fiscal year.

Mr. Beelen questioned how any conclusions could be drawn when so many have different fiscal years.

Mr. Stypula stated he would contact Earl Ryan about that, and let everyone know his response via e-mail before they return home today.

8. Update on Cost Sharing by Taxation Authorities for Defense of Michigan Tax Tribunal Appeals

Don Stypula stated they had a good meeting and discussed general ideas and concepts which would be integrated into a draft idea. There are legal questions. Can GVMC set up a pool? Does the Community College have the authority to enter a pool? Scott Schrage of the Treasury Department said there would need to be specific legislation enacted for the Treasury Department to participate.

Kurt Kimball stated that he knows an attorney who has worked on some of these issues and he may be willing to give advice pro bono.

9. Other

10. Executive Director Review

Staff was excused while the Executive Committee administered its annual review of the Executive Director, which included a survey of members.