

**GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

June 11, 2008

8:30 a.m.

GVMC Offices
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

MINUTES

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call

Present:

Haris Alibasic	City of Grand Rapids
Sam Bolt	City of Wyoming
Marta Brechting	Alpine Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Rick Chapla	The Right Place
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Jim Day	Kent County
Tom Fehsenfeld	At- Large
Don Hilton	Gaines Township
Andy Johnston	Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Erika Rosebrook	Ottawa County
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council

3. Call to Order

Chair Rick Root called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

4. Approval of Minutes from May, 2008

The minutes of the GVMC April, 2008, Legislative Committee meeting were accepted into record.

5. Environmental Bond – Great Lakes Environmental Cleanup, Restoration, and Protection

Don Stypula reported legislation was introduced last Wednesday to an environmental bond on the ballot. There will be an attempt in committee to make it part of the budget negotiations.

Don has informed Steve Chester GVMC does not have unanimity of thought on the issue. The Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce decided not to support the bond as over the years they have seen a steady increase in bureaucratic red tape to accompany the clean up.

Tom Fehsenfeld reported Crystal Flash has been involved in the new cleanup regulations since the mid 1990's. For a time the State paid for historical contamination funded through taxes. However, currently tax revenues are not being used for that. Crystal Flash sold its stations in 2001 and kept the environmental liability. What was expected to cost \$1 million is now at \$2 million and they are still unable to close even though there is not a threat to public health.

Andy Johnston stated the Chamber is concerned about the same issues as Tom is.

Don Stypula stated his recommendation was to support the bond in concept only and work with the Chamber to add language which they would be comfortable with.

Rich Chapla reported they recently celebrated the clean up of the Leer site. He asked the DEQ officials for a written response to the Chamber's letter and pleaded for a timely response. The issues are availability of resources to promote cleanup and also the bureaucratic red tape to administer the program.

Haris Alibasic stated the City of Grand Rapids has already made statements of support. The City has made exceptional use of the brownfield development program.

Don Stypula asked the committee to give him authorization to draft a response of support for the environmental bond stating the concerns of the regulatory process.

Rick Root stated there is not agreement within the committee. If we want to make sure to the committee's concerns are addressed, Chapla, Fehsenfeld and the Chamber should review the statement to make sure they approve of the wording.

Rick Chapla stated the diversion of money to the general fund also needs to be addressed.

Don Stypula reported by the next Board meeting, the issue will be over. He said he would work in good faith with MAC, MML and MTA, along with the others to

make sure an appropriate statement is constructed so he can take it to the next Executive committee meeting and ask for authority to move forward.

Rick Root stated a resolution can not be created as that needs to go to the full Board for approval. It would have to be a letter or whitepaper.

Mike DeVries asked if the whitepaper sent to legislators would state that we are willing to support the bond if our issues are addressed.

Rick Root said yes.

Erika Rosebrook stated that the paper needed to be written so that *if* the issues were addressed, *then* we would support it.

Rick Root indicated we need assurance the money will be used for cleanup, not administration. He directed Don should craft letter endorsing the bond with the requirement that the regulatory system is overhauled.

6. Annexation

Don Stypula reported legislation regarding annexation is currently in the House and Senate. The Senate majority leader has put this on hold due to this being an election year. The issue will likely be set aside until after the fall elections.

7. Senate 1249 – Storm Water Utility

Nothing further to report on this issue. We are continuing to work with the Chamber and manufacturers. It is not anticipated to move until fall.

8. HB 6112

HB 6112 expands 312 and puts arbitration in the room, taking the last offer from either side regardless of funding. The result raises costs. Currently police and firefighters are covered. It may be expanded to include correction officers.

Mike DeVries noted that this expansion is contrary to our position which needs to be reinforced.

Don Stypula stated he would send an e-mail alert reinforced last year's paper on reform and urging a no vote.

9. 2009-2010 Legislative Priorities

Don Stypula stated he didn't have any recommendations regarding the lists.

After discussion it was decided to amend the list in the following manner:

- Revenue Sharing
- Removal of Obstacles for Multi-Jurisdiction Service Sharing: Amendments to Existing State
- Transportation Funding
- Land Use
- Tax Restructuring
- Recall
- Manufactured Housing

Under the philosophical list, the following changes were decided:

- Local Control
- Limit / Eliminate Unfunded State and Federal Mandates
- Development / Deployment Incentives
- Threshold Review of State Government Services and Costs / Improve State Government Efficiency
- Regulatory Reform / Limits on
- Telecom

Don will bring back the revised list to the next meeting.

10. Other

Candidates Forum

Mike DeVries asked when the candidates' forum was to be held.

Don Stypula indicated after the primaries.

Mike DeVries stated we should get a date set on the calendar now and check with the schedules of the legislature. Earlier may be better than later.

Don Stypula will look at dates as early in September as possible. He will make a quick call to the Majority leader and have a date within a couple of days.

11. Adjourn – 10:00.