

**GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**March 10, 2010**

**8:30 a.m.**

GVMC Offices  
678 Front Ave., Suite 200  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

**MINUTES**

**1. Call To Order**

Chair Mike DeVries called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Present:

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Chris Burns	Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins	Cascade Township
Sam Bolt	City of Wyoming
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Denny Hoemke	Algoma Township
Jim LaPeer	Cannon Township
Bob May	City of Hastings
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Don Tubbs	City of Hastings
Keith Van Beek	Ottawa County

**3. Minutes**

**MOTION – To Approve the January 2010, Legislative Committee Minutes.  
MOVE – Van Beek. SUPPORT – May. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Lansing Update – Bill Anderson & David Bertram, Michigan Township  
Association**

The Government Appropriations committee in the House started yesterday out of subcommittee with a 3% cut to the budget and 3% cut to revenue sharing with a \$10 million hit to statutory and an adjustment of \$19 million to constitutional. Counties are getting hit 3.1% all statutory. MTA, MML & MAC testified. They were told it could have been up to 20% cut. Education has also taken cuts.

The census results will be received in a year. Traditionally, revenue sharing is implemented with that count. By next April, three of the six payments will already be complete and the remaining three will be on the new count. They are also talking about tinkering with that.

Keith Van Beek asked how that affected Detroit.

David Bertram said he thinks Papageorge is thinking about Detroit in the crafting of the budget.

Bill Anderson said there is concern for the \$20 million hole for those communities which are losing population.

Don Stypula asked what David and Bill would recommend GVMC members do.

David Bertram said GVMC members should talk with legislators about how the current cuts affect their communities and also about attempts to delay implementation of the census.

Bill Anderson reported the Senate has had its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting on government reform legislation which would include the 20% mandatory public employee contribution to health care insurance. The Senate has put up a substitute which says local public employees must pay 20%, however they could opt out with a 2/3 vote of their governing body. State employees are not governed by the same laws. It is a volatile issue.

David Bertram reported on legislation regarding publishing of legal notices. A package of bills was introduced to get the law changed to allow for web site or public access channel notices to serve as notice. The press is fighting back. It could save local communities lots of money. Bills 5845 & 47.

Jim LaPeer asked about public employees' insurance regulation regarding health savings accounts. He has heard the bills require only 10% for HSA plans rather than 20%. Does it say who funds the high deductible?

Bill Anderson stated it doesn't. There is also another bill which would require competitive bids for janitorial, transportation, etc. for public entities which could end up costing locals \$20,000 to do.

David Bertram stated there is lots of talk regarding unfunded mandates, but no follow through so far. It is not being taken seriously at this point.

Jim LaPeer reported Cannon Township has passed a resolution regarding state unfunded mandates and has asked questions about suing the state over the issue.

Bill Anderson stated Durant did this and it took 15 years and lots of money. And it affects only mandates, not options.

David Bertram added it has to be a sizable issue to make it cost justifiable.

## **5. Issues Update**

Don Stypula reported it is an election year and asked the committee if they had any ideas on how to engage the candidates. After the primaries are done, would it help if we brought them in to have a debate?

Alex Arends asked if GVMC would endorse a candidate.

Don Stypula stated we couldn't do that, but if we could get enough people to an event, we could make their views well known.

Denny Hoemke said if we do that we are likely to hear just a lot of political double talk. It is best to find people who are bringing in a fresh look and get to them early.

Jim LaPeer added we should keep a scorecard. Give them our three top issues and track them.

Keith Van Beek stated if we wait until after the primary, most of the races will already have been decided. We should put a packet out with our positions and the background and tell everyone we will track them on it. Have them sign a letter regarding their positions.

Mike DeVries stated we should define the top GVMC issues.

Jim Buck added that being prior to the primaries would be key.

Mike DeVries said it should be on GVMC letter and direct them to talk to the GVMC member communities for clarification.

Keith Van Beek said we must ask them to respond, send out a media release, and report the outcome to members.

Bob May added we should also include the MTA, MML & MAC as affiliations to let them know these are also included.

Mike DeVries reported we need to let them know who GVMC is, what it does and who its affiliates are. We need to define our process and hold people accountable.

Jim Buck stated we needed to get this information out to candidates by mid May and ask for its return by June 10.

Jim LaPeer asked if we should fine tune the legislative priorities for this.

Keith Van Beek indicated it should be done at the April meeting.

Mike DeVries directed Don to send out the five top GVMC issues to be reviewed in April.

Don Stypula stated there was a problem with the April Legislative committee meeting date and he would send out a notice with an alternative date.

Don Stypula reported there was nothing new to report on the Municipal Partnership Act. Also state transit funding will not move until the lame duck session.

Federal transportation funding has been extended, but reduced for this month. Some time this month the Senate will send over an extension to last to the end of the year.

## **6. Other**

## **7. Adjourn - 9:50 a.m.**

**MOTION - To Adjourn. MOVE – Buck. SUPPORT – Arends. MOTION CARRIED.**