

**GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 11, 2007

8:30 a.m.

40 Pearl St. NW Ste. 410
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

MINUTES

1. Call To Order

ROLL CALL

Present:

Haris Albasic	City of Grand Rapids
Chuck Bloom	Cannon Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Jim Day	Kent County
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Erika Rosebrook	Ottawa County
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Bill Wiersma	Tallmadge Township
Michael Young	City of Rockford

2. Call to Order

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

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the March 2007 GVMC Legislative Committee were reviewed.

MOTION – To Approve the March 2007 Legislative Committee Minutes.

MOVE – DeVries. SUPPORT – Root. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Transportation Funding

A. Presentation by Keith Ledbetter, Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association

Keith Ledbetter gave a presentation regarding transportation funding and distributed information from MITA and CRAM, detailing its transportation funding proposal.

B. Discussion of GVMC Position

Bill Wiersma stated that polling says 80% of the population is opposed to increased gas tax. It would be a tough sell to the population.

Michael Young reported Michigan certainly needs more road funds; however, it can't look at this plan as it is in a vacuum. We need more information on the overall picture. The problem is monumental.

Jon Rice stated the Kent County Road Commission's revenue has been flat for the past two years and with just a 1% increase over 6 years. They now have been directed to cut \$1.5 million for the remainder of the year.

Don Stypula asked if transportation is expected to be in the budget fix package.

Jon Rice reported he did not get that impression, but nothing is for sure.

Keith Ledbetter stated they have been talking to the decision makers in the mix, Dillion, Bishop, and the Governor.

Haris Albasic reported Grand Rapids will be supporting this package. It has seen decreases in funding and needs to attract and keep business with better roads.

Abed Itani stated funding has been constant, but inflation has been eating into it. The gas tax needs to be reframed into a use tax.

Jim Buck asked if this should be discussed within the Ad Hoc committee.

Mike DeVries stated this program would result in a doubling of the overall tax. There may be different ways we need to look at tax. Should it be a percentage such as the sales tax? We could temporarily endorse it until we had more time to look into it.

Jon Rice indicated what you see today is the best it is going to be as far as roads go.

Rick Root stated we need to spend some time on this issue, maybe consider looking at it in the ad hoc committee. We will have a sidebar after this meeting to discuss it.

Jon Rice stated if a position is going to be taken; it needs to be done by June.

Rick Root indicated that may not be time enough to formulate one.

5. Senate Plan to Privatize Foster Care System

Don Stypula reported Kent County has asked to postpone this issue as they are in discussions with Senator Hardiman.

6. Other Issues

Don Stypula distributed an F.Y.I. item on liquor licenses.

Don Stypula asked which communities would be hurt by the Governor's executive order on grants.

Ottawa County, Grand Rapids, Kent County, and Rockford are all concerned. It needs to be determined what a grant is and what is a contract. Not much is known at this time.

Erika Rosebrook reported they will be summarizing the affect on Ottawa County and will send it to Don to be distributed to all.

Bill Wiersma stated numerous fee and tax increase plans have been proposed. We need to be sensible about endorsing any one at this point.

Don Stypula stated he would watch the grant issue and forward any information he receives.

It was decided the ad hoc committee was not needed to look at the transportation funding issue.

Mike DeVries, Don Stypula and Rick Root will draft a letter to Jon Rice that says our policy is to support good roads. We won't endorse any specific proposal, but to endorse supporting our transportation system.

Rick Root stated that the time frame was fast, and there wasn't time to bring it through the entire process. The statement should refer back to our overall tax policy

statement. The policy statement should be included in the letter.

Adjourn. 10:00 a.m.