

**GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

August 17, 2011

8:30 a.m.

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

MINUTES

1. Call To Order

Chair Rick Root called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Sam Bolt	City of Wyoming
Chris Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins	Cascade Township
Carol Hennessey	Kent County
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Ken Snow	City of Greenville
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Keith VanBeek	Ottawa County

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the August, 2011 GVMC Legislative Committee. MOVE – Cousins. SUPPORT – Burns. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Update from Lansing with Andy Schor of the MML

Andy Schor of the MML reported the 80/20 – hard cap public healthcare bill is expected to be taken up on the 24th. Not a lot of other issues are on the docket. Discussions on other items such as the Urban Cooperation bill are ongoing, but will

probably be held over until fall.

The PPT replacement is on the list for fall. The administration is saying they want to eliminate it and fully replace the revenue, but they are not saying how. Some are advocating for a constitutional replacement, as is the MML. The MML has started a media campaign to replace, not erase. They are also meeting with various papers to put forth their position.

Keith VanBeek said it appears the Lt. Governor is pushing the PPT issue hard, but the Governor is less committal, almost as if they are not on the same page.

Andy Schor replied that the Governor typically comes out with the plan but relies on the Lt. Governor to run the show.

Rick Root asked about the Governor's language which seems to be shifting from focus on municipalities to "core" cities.

Andy Schor said generally, the Governor references the urban area. He sees no change in the Governor's intent.

Rick Root asked about the EVIP pot of money. Many are struggling with the rules and qualifications for eligibility.

Andy Schor replied the MML has offered training and the Treasury has put out specifications. Anyone who has questions should call the MML or access the resources on our web page.

Rick Root asked how the EVIP program was going to be funded.

Andy Schor answered that according to the Governor, revenue should start increasing because of tax changes and there should be more money to spread around. He added in the fall there should be discussions on the proposed bridge to Canada. In October the Governor will report on infrastructure funding. Replacement for brownfield credits will also be addressed.

Don Stypula asked about Act 51 gas tax. We need to do much more than just focus on matching funding. The tax expires September 30. It does not appear there are the votes to approve. This is a major concern for us.

Andy Schor reported the fall session could bring a bipartisan package to address the problems involved in the medical marijuana issue. The court has said that dispensaries are not allowed. It is uncertain whether they will have the votes to get something done.

5. Legislative Priorities

State Tax Policy and Local Fiscal Stability

Revenue Sharing – The Michigan Economic Vitality Incentive Program

(EVIP): The Grand Valley Metro Council supports the fair and equitable implementation of the Michigan Economic Vitality Incentive Program in a manner that ensures program eligibility for all cities, townships, villages and other taxing authorities that have demonstrated compliance with EVIP performance metrics. The GVMC also supports that revenue sharing for counties, as agents of the state, be preserved at full levels.

Tax Restructuring and Inducements for Economic Development: The Grand Valley Metro Council supports the restructuring of Michigan’s tax code to provide a more predictable and stable tax environment for businesses and ensure that county and local governments have at their disposal tax incentives and other inducements to retain and grow existing businesses and attract new business investment.

Personal Property Tax: The GVMC supports the phase-out of Michigan’s existing Personal Property Tax provided that the Michigan Legislature first establishes a “hold harmless” revenue replacement mechanism, placed in the Michigan Constitution by state voters, to ensure that taxing authorities maintain adequate revenues, at existing levels, to support critical county and local government services.

Funding for Transportation and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

The Grand Valley Metro Council, in its capacity as the metropolitan planning organization for the Grand Rapids region, supports increases in both state and federal transportation funding to improve the state’s entire multi-modal transportation network together with funding mechanisms to ensure that public water and sewer systems and other public assets are maintained and improved through strategic public investments. To that end, the GVMC desires to engage Governor Snyder, Lieutenant Governor Calley and the members of the 96th Michigan Legislature to help develop efficient and effective approaches for financing improvements to critical public infrastructure.

Improving Governmental Efficiencies

One Annual Property Tax Bill: To enhance governmental efficiency and lower operational costs, the Grand Valley Metro Council supports legislation enabling taxing authorities to develop and transmit to property owners a single, annual property tax bill.

Electronic Publication of Legal Notices: The Grand Valley Metro Council supports legislation to eliminate current legal requirements to publish official public notices in a “newspaper of record” and authorize counties, cities, townships, villages and other public entities and corporations to publish official legal notices and other pertinent public information via web sites, social media sites, web-based information portals, and other more accessible and timely electronic methods.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Elimination of Obstacles for Multi-Jurisdictional Service Sharing: The Grand Valley Metro Council supports amendments to 1989 P.A, 292 – the Metropolitan Councils Act – to remove language that limits the ability of Metro Council-member counties, cities, townships and villages to share the provision of services on a regional basis through a Metropolitan Council.

Unfunded State Mandates

The Grand Valley Metro Council steadfastly opposes the imposition of unfunded state mandates on counties and local units and strongly encourages the Legislature to adopt the recommendations cited in the 2010 report of the Legislative Commission on Statutory Mandates.

Medical Marihuana

The Grand Valley Metro Council supports the efforts of Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette to seek court clarification of the issues surrounding medical marihuana dispensaries and strongly urges Governor Rick Snyder and members of the 96th Michigan Legislature to support legislation amending the voter-initiated Medical Marihuana Act to give local governments greater control over the activities associated with the growth, distribution and dispensing of medical marihuana.

6. Infrastructure Financing Update

Don Stypula reported the authorization to assess the 18.4 cent per gallon gas tax expires 9/30/11. Stabenow supports extending the authorization as does Levin. House members are being threatened with primary opposition if they support

7. Adjourn – 10:00 a.m.