



Rick Baker
Sworn In As Member of
GVMC Board of Directors

Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce President Mr. Rick Baker has joined the GVMC Board of Directors. Mr. Baker was appointed by the Board to serve a three year term as an At-Large Member. He was sworn into office yesterday at our meeting.

Baker is President of the Chamber which is the largest business focused organization in our region. With over 2,700 members the Chamber is involved in wide variety of economic development activities and enhances our strategic initiatives to foster greater collaboration in economic development.

Over the past 18 months, GVMC and the GR Chamber have worked closely together on a wide variety of issues including transportation funding, regional economic vitality and public/private collaboration. Rick also served as a member of Kent County's Community Collaboration Work Group.

Commissioner Jim Saalfeld
Presents Community
Collaboration Work Group
Report

Yesterday, Kent County Commissioner and GVMC Board Member Jim Saalfeld presented the findings of the Community Collaboration Work Group to our Board of Directors. The Work Group was formed

in November 2011 and included representatives of Kent County, cities, townships, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, the Right Place, Inc., non-profit representatives and experts in municipal law and economics.

The Work Group reviewed the major functions and services provided by cities, villages, townships and counties. It then analyzed a long series of considerations and criteria including such things as existing collaborations, cost effectiveness, service enhancements, public support, trust, transparency and collaborations with the greatest impact.

National experts on governmental consolidation were also consulted and studies of other regions reviewed. The effectiveness of these regional consolidations were reviewed and analyzed for their effectiveness.

The report stated, " the impressive record of local government collaboration among local units should continue and be expanded to include more of our local governments. These efforts have resulted in countless cost-savings to citizens and immeasurable service improvements Through the leadership of our elected and appointed officials, the citizens continue to be aptly served by responsive and responsible government." The full

report can be found on our website next week at www.gvmc.org.



Kent County Commissioner Jim Saalfeld and Brenda McNabb-Strange of Hastings

Transportation Funding
Debate Continues

The Legislature has sent to the Governor a one-time increase of \$350 million for road maintenance and the debate continues on. Governor Snyder previously asked for \$1.2 billion per year in new funding and asked legislative leaders to continue working on other options before the summer recess..

New bills are being debated including (HB 4630, HB 4632 and HB 4633) would increase registration fees for most vehicles including farming vehicles, hybrids, motorcycles and commercial trucks. The bills also would increase the driver's license fee and late fees. One new element in the discussion is a \$75 fee for hybrid or electric vehicles and possible increase in motorcycle fees as well. These fee increases as expected to generate an additional \$200 million. Other plans are also being considered.