



Kentwood, Wyoming, Grand Rapids Hold Historic Joint Meeting

Last night, for the first time in history, the full city commissions of Grand Rapids, Kentwood and Wyoming met in a joint session. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the results of a study by the ICMA (International City/County Management Association). The study focused on opportunities for consolidation of the police and fire departments in the three cities.



Prior to the meeting Kentwood Mayor Richard Clanton joined Wyoming Mayor Jack Poll and Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell for a photograph.

The three hour meeting included a great deal of praise for the three community's police and fire operations and highlighted potential opportunities to consolidate or further collaborate within the departments. This meeting was the first public step in opening the dialogue between the three cities regarding the operational and management issues involved in a consolidation effort. No decisions were made at the meeting and now the dialogue will begin between the three cities, their police and fire departments and their residents. It was stressed often that this was the beginning of the process and a great deal of work still needs to be done before any decisions could be made.



Presentation to Grand Valley State University Board of Trustees

On Friday, July 12th, I was able to make a presentation to the Board of Trustees of Grand Valley State University regarding my current graduate assistantship with Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. Executive Director John Weiss addressed the board regarding GVMC's partnership with Grand Valley and explained the programs that GVMC offers to the community including REGIS, Transportation, LGROW and our Strategic Initiatives. I then presented on the opportunities that I have been given as a graduate assistant at GVMC.

The graduate assistantship represents a unique partnership between GVMC and GVSU. The ability to learn skills and experience government collaboration firsthand has made this an invaluable experience for me. Most of my time has been spent on the LGROW program and I highlighted the ways in which this has tied in with my Public Administration program at GVSU. For example, strategic planning, grants management and program management are all components of the Public Administration program, as are, civic leadership and governmental cooperation. These are all things I have had hands on experience with at GVMC so far during my assistantship.

The presentation to the board was just another experience from GVMC that I can add to the long list on my resume. Being able to convey the partnership between GVMC and GVSU and how influential it has been for me was a great opportunity.