

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, April 16, 2008
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Peter Varga	<i>(Chair)</i>	The Rapid
Pat Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Dick Davies		Cannon Township
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Don Hilton, Sr.		Gaines Township
Jim Holtrop		Ottawa County
Ken Krombeen		City of Grandville
Dal McBurrows		MDOT
Dave Pasquale		City of Lowell
Jon Rice	<i>Proxy for Bob Homan Sandi Frost Parrish</i>	KCRC
		Plainfield Township
Darrel Schmalzel		Kent County Commissioner
Keith VanBeek		City of Walker
		City of Kentwood

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Jim Fetzer	The Rapid
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Steve Redmond	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	RWBC-WMEAC
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Steve Warren	KCRC
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

James Beelen		Allendale Township
Marta Brechting	<i>(Vice Chair)</i>	Alpine Township
Larry Bruursema		OCRC
Christine Burns		City of Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins		Cascade Township

Sharon DeLange
Mike DeVries
Rick DeVries
Jeff Dood
George Haga
Bryan Harrison
Dennis Hoemke
Bill Holland
Bob Homan
Jim Koslosky
Jim McIntyre
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Sandi Frost Parrish
Rich Pastoor
Jack Poll
Don VanDoeselaar
Bill Wiersma

Village of Sparta
Grand Rapids Township
City of Grand Rapids
City of Rockford
Ada Township
Caledonia Charter Township
Algoma Township
Georgetown Township
Plainfield Township
GRFIA
Courtland Township
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Kent County Commissioner
City of Wyoming
City of Wyoming
City of Hudsonville
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sevensma noted one correction to the minutes. Varga entertained a motion to approve of the March 19, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Hilton, to approve of the March 19, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes with the aforementioned correction. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma stated that he had heard that the Grand Rapids Eastern Rail Bed between Grand Rapids and Ionia may be abandoned and possibly converted into a bike path. Discussion ensued.

IV. FY2008-2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS

Speaking on **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the committee that the City of Wyoming and the Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP) are requesting to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP.

The City of Wyoming’s request was to advance construct two segments of 44th Street and the US-131 interchange currently listed in FY2009 using EDF-C funds in FY2008. Robinson explained that EDF-C funds cannot generally be used for advance construction. However, an exception has been allowed. He noted that only federal EDF-C funds can be used for advance construction—not state. ITP’s request was to amend the FY2008 TIP to include several changes and cost updates due to FTA apportionments being released.

Rice stated that he did not think that there could be such a thing as a “one time exception” and asked that MDOT look into how they make exceptions. Itani

agreed with Rice and stated that there should be consistency in how exceptions are made. Varga recommended addressing both items with two separate motions.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the TIP to include the City of Wyoming's request to advance construct using EDF-C funds for the project previously identified by Staff.

MOTION by Holtrop, SUPPORT by Bush, to approve the City of Wyoming's request to advance construct using federal EDF-C funds for the project previously identified by staff.

Discussion continued. VanBeek asked if MDOT makes the decision regarding such exemptions or if that is controlled by the Technical and Policy Committees. Robinson responded that, as he understands it, there are two departments within MDOT that are involved in determining whether or not to allow advance construction using EDF-C funds. Additional discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Varga called into question the motion on the floor. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Varga entertained a motion to amend the TIP to include several changes and cost updates due to FTA apportionments being released.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the changes previously identified by Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. ITP FY2008 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A** in the agenda, Itani informed the committee that ITP is requesting to amend the UPWP for FY2008 by adding \$250,000 in Section 5307 funding for a feasibility study. The study will continue to focus on NEPA and design work on the South Division Bus Rapid Transit project. Varga added that the additional funding is necessary for environmental work. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the UPWP for FY2008 to include the project as identified by staff.

MOTION by Rice, SUPPORT by Hilton, to recommend to the GVMC board approval of amending the UPWP for FY2008 as identified. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. US-131 AT 44th STREET PROJECT

Robinson provided an update on the US-131 at 44th Street project. Currently, this project is moving along as scheduled and the right-of-way is already completed. Kent added that the design is moving forward and nearing completion. He

expects the project to be obligated in August or September and let in October or November. Most of the work should be completed in one construction season.

VII. OZONE ACTION! PROGRAM

Faber informed the committee that Ozone Action! season has now begun and asked the committee members to consider hosting the display at their agencies again this year. She also requested that committee members forward to her names of health and fitness or environmental events in their communities so that she may look into participating.

VIII. MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION FUNDING TASK FORCE

Kent showed a PowerPoint presentation to the committee regarding the latest developments of the Michigan Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2). Each committee member received a hard copy of the presentation. The Task Force was created through Public Act 221 of 2007 to "review the adequacy of surface transportation and aeronautics service provision and finance" in Michigan. This applies to roads, transit, and aviation.

Kent discussed the composition of the Task Force and the Citizens' Advisory Committee, and their duties. One of the more pressing issues the committee is trying to address is that of potential alternate sources of funding to replace or supplement the existing state gas tax. Preliminary findings and recommendations are due on October 31, 2008. There is a TF2 meeting in Grand Rapids at the ITP office on April 21st. Varga added that there will be a public comment period at the beginning of the meeting and at the end of the day.

In addition, there are two commissions, created through SAFETEA-LU, reviewing national transportation needs and funding options. The first commission found that an additional \$225 to \$338 Billion per year (compared to \$86 Billion per year currently being spent) should be invested to address the national transportation needs. This would involve increasing current fuel taxes by 25 to 40 cents per gallon per year, and then long term, finding alternatives to the gas tax. However, this will be difficult to implement because the price of gas is so high already.

Varga, a member of TF2, provided the committee with additional information about the problems that TF2 is trying to solve. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

None

X. ADJOURNMENT

Varga adjourned the Policy Committee at 10:34 am.