

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, July 23, 2008
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Peter Varga	<i>(Chair)</i>	The Rapid
Pat Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Bill Cousins		Cascade Township
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Jim Holtrop	<i>Proxy for</i>	Ottawa County
	<i>Don VanDoeselaar</i>	City of Hudsonville
	<i>James Beelen</i>	Allendale Township
	<i>Larry Bruursema</i>	OCRC
Jim Koslosky		GRFIA
Dal McBurrows		MDOT
Dave Pasquale		City of Lowell
Jon Rice	<i>Proxy for</i>	KCRC
	<i>Bob Homan</i>	Plainfield Township
	<i>Sandi Frost Parish</i>	Kent County Commissioner
Darrel Schmalzel		City of Walker
Keith VanBeek		City of Kentwood

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Roger Belknap	KCRC
Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
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	
Dick Davies	Cannon Township	
Sharon DeLange	Village of Sparta	

Mike DeVries
Rick DeVries
Jeff Dood
George Haga
Bryan Harrison
Don Hilton, Sr.
Dennis Hoemke
Bill Holland
Bob Homan
Ken Krombeen
Jim McIntyre
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Sandi Frost Parrish
Rich Pastoor
Jack Poll
Don VanDoeselaar
Bill Wiersma

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve of the May 21, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Koslosky, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to approve of the May 21, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

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

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Itani spoke to the committee regarding a request from the Kent County Road Commission to add an awarded enhancement project to FY2008 in the TIP for the construction of the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail. This project was originally awarded a few years ago and was in an older TIP, but needed to be placed in the FY2008-2011 TIP in order for the KCRC to obligate it. Itani further commented that this change could be handled with an administrative modification to the TIP by adding funds to the FY2008 General Program Account (GPA).

Varga entertained a motion to modify the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the project identified by Staff.

MOTION by Rice, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to approve of administratively modifying the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the addition of funds to the local enhancement GPA in FY2008. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Robinson continued, addressing **Item IV: Attachment B**, which included a request from MDOT to add the FY2009 General Program Accounts (GPAs) to the FY2008-2011 TIP. He stated that this is something that is done every year.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the project identified by Staff.

MOTION by VanBeek, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of amending the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the MDOT project identified by Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. FY2008 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) REVIEW

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson provided the committee with a brief overview of projects in the TIP that were not yet obligated at the time of the document's printing, and took project updates as they were offered. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

VI. NONMOTORIZED PLAN

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Dewey updated the committee on the progress of the Rails-to-Trails case statement for the 2010 campaign and the revision of the Nonmotorized portion of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Dewey stated that Rails-to-Trails is currently working to lobby Congress to fund 40 communities across the country with \$50 million each to promote trails, walking and biking for improved mobility. In Michigan, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor were selected as potential funding recipients. Concurrently, Dewey is working to revise the Nonmotorized portion of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The Nonmotorized Committee worked closely with the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition and the West Michigan Strategic Alliance to draft a case statement, or a formal request and project list, for Rails-to-Trails to include with the materials that they sent to Congress to lobby for funding. Thus far, the Committee has developed a way to select projects, as well as a 1st and 2nd draft list of nonmotorized projects. The final case statement, along with several maps, was recently submitted to Rails-to-Trails. Dewey encouraged the committee to include a statement of support should Grand Rapids be selected to receive the funding so that it is evident that this is something that the Metro Council Supports.

Itani added that GVMC was contacted by the non-motorized activists in order to participate in this effort, and that GVMC decided to participate in order to avoid having an agency with no experience compile a list of nonmotorized projects without GVMC's input. He clarified that this is an earmark project that may or may not happen, but that if it happens, it may impact other projects in our MPO area. This topic was discussed thoroughly at the Technical Committee. Itani stated that GVMC is against earmarks in principle, but that, in this instance, this is the game, and if we're going to play, it needs to be by the same rules as everyone else. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

VII. OZONE ACTION! PROGRAM

Referring to **Item VII: Attachment A**, Faber provided the committee with a brief overview of the activities that she has taken part in over the spring and summer to promote the Ozone Action! program. Activities have included radio advertising,

a kickoff event, participation in several public events, rotating the display between agencies, participating in a radio interview, and donating promotional materials to the Kent County Road Commission and the Kent County Health Department. Faber expects to continue radio advertising through August. She also plans to continue to attend public events and rotate the display between agencies for the duration of the summer.

Faber noted that the Ozone Action! program is going to change significantly starting in FY2009 with the addition of PM2.5, another nonattainment pollutant. As of October 1, the program will become a year-round program, thereby keeping the public informed about air quality through every season. The program name will change to the West Michigan Clean Air Action Program. Activities to promote PM2.5 awareness are expected to remain similar to ozone at this time. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

VIII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Koslosky provided the committee with an update on the GRFIA and aviation funding.

Varga stated that fuel prices have hit The Rapid very hard this year, and that they may consider raising fares and eliminating the Air Porter to compensate. However, on a positive note, ridership is going up due to various reasons, and there are so many requests for van pools that they have a backlog they can't fill. Varga also provided an update on the work of the Transportation Funding Task Force. Discussion ensued.

VanBeek asked who the final report of the Transportation Funding Task Force would go to. Varga responded that there will be an initial report in October that will go to the governor and the legislature. The final report, which is due in April, will contain the task force's recommendations on how to do the revenue adjustments to achieve various scenarios.

Holtrop stated that, because of the decrease in state funding, the Ottawa County Road Commission has asked the County Board to put a .5 mil tax increase on the November ballot for road improvement, research, etc., for six years. Holtrop expects this request to be put on the ballot, pending some language revisions. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Stypula invited the committee members to attend a legislative breakfast that will take place in September and include candidates for the two major parties in the legislative districts that fall within GVMC's MPO area. Discussion ensued.

IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

Varga entertained a motion to adjourn the Policy Committee Meeting.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by Koslosky, to adjourn the July 23, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Varga adjourned the Policy Committee Meeting at 10:35 am.