



## **GVMC Legislative Committee**

**8:30 a.m. Wednesday March 9, 2011 – Metro Council Offices**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from the February 9, 2011 meeting**
- 3. Update on current developments in Lansing with David Bertram, Legislative Team Leader, Michigan Townships Association (via telephone)**
- 4. Local Option Taxation – Process for establishing GVMC policy position**
- 5. Economic Development Incentives – Developing a GVMC position**
- 6. Issues Update**
  - a. SB 34 – Elimination of Personal Property Tax: Bill sponsor and Senate leadership have delayed action at the request of the Governor.**
  - b. State Budget: Presented on February 17; House and Senate Appropriations Committees holding hearings and preparing to move forward.**
  - c. Revenue Sharing – We are awaiting Governor Snyder’s special March message to the Legislature regarding “best practices” for county and local governments and other details about his local government package.**
  - d. Legislation to Increase Authority and Powers of Municipal Emergency Financial Managers – Package of legislation (HBs 4214-4218) has passed the House and is poised for final approval in the Michigan Senate.**
- 7. Other Issues**

**GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**February 9, 2010**

**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:

Haris Alibasic	City of Grand Rapids
Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Sam Bolt	City of Wyoming
Chris Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins	Cascade Township
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Bob Homan	Plainfield Township
Jim LaPeer	Cannon Township
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Keith Van Beek	Ottawa County

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the December 2010 GVMC Legislative Committee. MOVE – Bolt. SUPPORT – Van Beek. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Debrief of January 24, 2011 Meeting with Legislators**

Don Stypula reported nine legislators attended the January 24 meeting. It was a

good meeting with lots of good discussion.

Rick Root said he felt it was important to review the GVMC legislative priorities as we need to quickly build relationships with the new freshman class. It was very helpful to get to know them.

Alex Arends reported that Amanda Price asked for five easy and five difficult things they can do for GVMC. We should follow up on her request.

Rick Root stated GVMC's legislative priorities are hard. What would be considered the low hanging fruit?

Don Hilton said recall legislation could be considered easy. We almost had it 5-6 yrs. ago.

Public notice publication was also mentioned as an easy item.

Keith Van Beek added legislators are eager to get their name on legislation as a sponsor and it could be a good strategy to partner with them on this.

Alex Arends said even two or three items would be good.

Haris Alibasic said he didn't see public notice legislation passing as in the past we have been stymied by a large lobbying campaign by papers. Are we really willing to take that on when we only have about a 5% chance of winning?

Chris Burns added if they take on three easy items, they might not want to take on any hard and point to the easy items as their victories for us.

Rick Root stated we could poll our membership for items to pass along.

Alex Arends said Amanda Price came forward and asked for the items and we need to respond to her in a timely fashion. Secondly, we need to feed them a few things that make them feel like they are working with us. Unfunded mandates and intergovernmental cooperation should be easy.

Don Hilton pointed out that in some parts of the state; many people don't have on-line access and rely on the local papers.

Bill Cousins said we should just focus on the legislative priorities and stick to these.

Rick Root said he would like to encourage all Council members to call their legislators on Mondays or Fridays when they are in-district and sit down for a face to face.

Same Bolt added there are so many new legislators; this is the time to build relationships personally.

Mike DeVries said we need to do a follow up to our January meeting. Those that were there need something on Metro Council letterhead saying we appreciate the conversation and want to continue to be in communication with you. We would like you to consult with us on future legislation.

Rick Root said we also should reach beyond our own individual boundaries. As members of GVMC we can speak for the whole of GVMC even outside of our own jurisdictions. Rick asked Don to send the legislators a follow-up letter to the January meeting.

Don Stypula stated he had already done so through e-mail.

Mike DeVries instructed Don to forward that follow-up letter to all legislative committee members.

Keith Van Beek also suggested we ask them to let us review legislation which might affect us.

Haris Alibasic said state legislators may view us as opposition, but we need to watch our position and welcome creativeness, but caution on a reasonable solution for local government.

Mike DeVries stated he believes the Governor is taking a CEO approach and everyone is expected to get behind him, with no consideration for the actual governance that has to take place at the local level.

Keith Van Beek cautioned it is important to have data to support or oppose any position with this governor.

## **5. Issues Update**

### **a. Legislation to Increase Authority and Powers of Municipal Emergency Financial Managers**

Don Stypula reported the Governor is having emergency financial managers trained who will be given superintending control over jurisdictions in financial crisis. It will include the power to suspend the voice of councils and boards as well as renegotiate contracts and inter into consolidation and service sharing agreements. Don will get out information to all on this today.

Bill Cousins reiterated that we need to attack the numbers and quantify the

information on cooperation and sharing.

Keith Van Beek encouraged everyone to have their financial expert plug their numbers into the template issued by the Governor. We don't want to be punished on this side of the state for being good stewards. We need to have the data in place to show we are better than the average and should not be punished. Also, for the private sector, part-time jobs were also used in their figures; we all should do the same so we are comparing apples to apples.

#### **6. Local Option Taxation – Process for Establishing GVMC Policy Position**

Don Stypula stated he would like to move this to next month's agenda.

Haris Alibasic asked Don to forward him the MML position on this.

#### **7. Prognosis for Achieving Grand Valley metro Council's 2011 Legislative Priorities**

Don Stypula stated he felt intergovernmental cooperation legislation might move and we have some sympathetic ears for unfunded mandates. However, transportation funding would not be expected to increase either on the state or federal level.

#### **8. Other**

Haris Alibasic added other legislation which should be watched are HB 4060, 4172, 4152; as well as Senate Resolutions B & C.

Don Stypula stated he will have an intern track this legislation as he is unable to keep up on everything.

#### **9. Adjourn – 10:00**