

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

Public Information & Education Subcommittee

Friday, August 20,, 2004
8:00 AM
Grand Valley Metro Council
40 Pearl NW, Suite 410
Grand Rapids, MI

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Attendance

The PIE Committee was called to order by Bowman at 8:05 AM.

Members Present:

Caryl Sue Abendroth	Citizen
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Rick Chapla	Right Place Program
Thomas McWhertor	Calvin College
Bonnie Shupe	Cannon Township
Rick Sullivan	Center for Environmental Study
Carol Townsend	MSU Center for Urban Affairs
Dave Van Antwerp	Creative Partners

Members Absent:

Judy Barnes	Home Builders Association
Beverly Drake	ACSET Council
Kendra Wills	MSU Extension

Others Present:

Priscilla Martin	Grand Valley Metro Council
Andy Bowman	Grand Valley Metro Council
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for June 18, 2004 were accepted.

3. Annual Conference:

Bowman questioned whether there should be another conference and if there is – what should we do with it? The 2004 conference turned out to be -\$4100. All revenues are in and may still have some expenses from speakers. Registrations and sponsorships were down and costs stayed about the same.

Stypula stated that he would like to continue the conference, but we need to increase the revenue. Should we increase the registration fee from \$50/\$60? Bowman stated that he thought the registration fee should be increased by \$25. Shupe questioned whether we would lose attendees by increasing the fee? Stypula noted that other conferences are more expensive then what we have been charging. Shupe questioned whether the topics covered at this year's conference could have cause the decline in registrations. McWhertor noted that sponsorships were also down. Stypula stated that he would look for foundation grants to fund the conference first and then adjust registration fees accordingly. Sullivan suggested going to the sponsors earlier. Bowman noted that the problem with that is that the program is not ready earlier. McWhertor commented that previous sponsors shouldn't need a program.

Shupe suggested that we compare the topics and number of attendees for each year of the conference. It was also suggested to come up with a list on who has attended the conference over the years and then call repeat and first timers and ask them why they attend, etc. It was decided that Shupe will come up with a draft copy of questions and email them out to PIE members for comment before the next meeting. It was also suggested to do a questionnaire for sponsors. Sullivan recommended starting with a letter and then

call. McWhertor stated that this should be done in the fall and that we should come up with a conference theme earlier. McWhertor volunteered to draft a letter for the next meeting.

It was also suggested to change venues. McWhertor recommended DeVos Place and Chapla suggested the Pinnacle Center at GVSU. Buck suggested having sponsorships for certain breakouts. Chapla added that we could gear sponsorships towards topics.

4. Public Education

A. New Traditional Neighborhoods

Abendroth noted that she attended the Associates Forum AIA Grand Valley Chapter "New Urbanism: Give People More Choices About Where and How they Want to Live." The presenter was Mark Miller of Nederveld. The participants commented on the real need for more awareness and education about this topic. Later Brian Welsh of Visbeen communicated he "had followed up with some of his associates and they are interested in doing something more – especially on educating the public and the officials. Abendroth asked the PIE Committee to consider taking a leadership role in this area – such as getting people together to brainstorm and implement a way to actually build a small new traditional neighborhood as a "learning lab" or "pilot" for Grand Rapids. Abendroth mention a news article stated Mr. Fred Meijer was rethinking the use of the land for the potential new zoo and wondered if that could be the spot for the "learning lab/pilot"? Shupe stated that Mark is doing something similar to traditional neighborhoods in Cannon Township. Abendroth suggested to start by coming up with a list of names of people that would be interested. Bowman suggested investigating with Judy Barnes group.

B. Save Our Towns, Save our Lands Video

Bowman stated that this video would help educate others regarding our Metro Framework. Townsend suggested a lunch meeting to view the video. It was decided to meet Friday, August 27th at the Frey Foundation and noon.

C. Lower Grand Watershed Plan Media Event

Stypula informed members that they were in the final stages of completing the Lower Grand Watershed plan. An interactive set of tools have been developed. They will be releasing this information at the City of Grand Rapids Lower Grand clean up day which is Saturday, October 9, 2004. Public Affairs Associates is paying for the event.

5. Other items of Business

A. Role of PIE

Delayed

B. Other

None

6. Future Agenda Items/Next Meeting Date:

The PIE Committee meets on the 3rd Friday of every month at the Grand Valley Metro Council at 8:00AM. The next PIE meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 17, 2004.

7. Adjournment:

McWhertor adjourned the committee meeting at about 9:35 AM.