

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Regional Environmental Planning Agency

Wednesday, February 25, 2004
9:00 AM

Grand Valley Metro Council
40 Pearl St. NW, Ste. 410
Grand Rapids, MI

Minutes

1. Call to Order:

Chair John Koches called the Regional Environmental Planning Agency to order at 9:05 AM. An attendance sheet was passed around and the following committee members were present:

Members Present:

Darwin Baas (for Jim Szejda)	Ottawa County Health Dept.
Aaron Bodbyl-Mast	Ottawa County Planning & Grants
Ken Krombeen	City of Grandville, City Manager
John Koches	GVSU – Annis Water Resources Institute
Corky Overmyer	City of Grand Rapids – EPSD
Joe Stapf	City of Wyoming, Public Utilities
Ken Zarzecki	Ottawa County Road Commission

Members Absent:

Ray Bruggink	At-Large
Paul Geerlings	Ottawa County Drain Commissioner
George Haga	Utility Advisory Board/Ada Township
Curtis Holt	City of Wyoming, City Manager
Curt Kemppainen	Kent County, Public Works
Michael Knapp Jr.	Knapp Law Firm
Dale Kraker	Eastbrook Homes
Roger Laninga	Kent County Drain Commission
Tom Leonard	West Michigan Environmental Action Council
Robb Meeuwsen	Zeeland Farm Services
Lynn Thomas	Byron/Gaines Utility Authority
Janice Tompkins	MDEQ, Surface Water Quality Division

Others Present:

Priscilla Babcock	Grand Valley Metro Council
Jim Smalligan	Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr, & Huber
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council

2. Minutes:

MOTION by Overmyer, **SUPPORTED** by Krombeen, to approve the minutes for November 12, 2003.
MOTION CARRIED.

Nay by Aaron Bodbyl-Mast – stating there was no quorum.

3. Staff Updates:

A. Rogue River Watershed Project – John Koches

- The Rogue River education project is ending this month.
- A series of land use planning workshops were held during January.
- Two farmers were chosen in the watershed to receive farming awards for implementing BMPs on their property.
- Working on the Rogue River Final Report for the Rogue I/E project.
- Tetra Tech held a focus group with members from the Rogue River Watershed Council to discuss the project.
- Helped Newaygo County Road Commission install a box culvert and other BMPs for the Kosten Drain site.
- Phone surveys were done to past participants of the Rogue River Watershed events.

B. NPDES Phase II – Jim Smalligan

- NPDES participants in the region have received their certificate of coverage.
- The Lower Grand Watershed project is an important piece to NPDES.
- Education program is continuing.
- The next major work element is the preparation of individual Storm Water Pollution Prevention Initiatives (SWPPI) for each community.
- The Lower Grand River Watershed Management Forum meeting is 9:30 am, March 16 at the Eberhard Center.

C. Kent County Septage Management Plan – John Koches

- Held work session with Kent County board members. There was reluctance to participate, but support of the effort - not seen as high importance. Almost a “if it’s not broke, don’t fix it” attitude. It was questioned “Who has died of typhoid lately?”
- Overmyer stated that the story hasn’t been told of the problem yet.
- Koches remarked that it is not over though – the problem won’t just go away.
- What should REPA do next?

D. Bio-Fuel Project – Corky Overmyer

- Project is complete – remove from REPA agenda.
- Very low demand to meet the supply in the area. There are no tax incentives for bio-fuels and it is more expensive so it makes it difficult to get people to use. Need to focus on beneficial environmental impacts for promoting its use.
- Baas stated that he read some where the bio-fuels reduces emissions approximately 30%.

4. Work Session: Strategy Session

A. Goals & Objectives

Koches noted the following items as goals and objectives of REPA: bio-fuel, septage, and NPDES. Stapf suggested adding “updating the Master Plan” and Overmyer suggested adding “work with the drain code.”

Stypula voiced that working with the Drain Code was a good idea. Bodbyl-Mast questioned what our role would be with the drain code? Overmyer stated that there were stormwater issues that need to be addressed, such as alternative methods then just “digging a ditch”. Smalligan noted that there is a challenge in funding stormwater projects. Bodbyl-Mast stated that the concerns of Ottawa County include the overall costs, and the costs of impacts for integrating natural resources.

Stypula stated that an issue MAC has is overall control – who would have it? Does the county have ultimate control over funding, resources, and staffing? Stypula gave the opinion that he did not think the Drain Code would pass and that he recommended a special meeting of the REPA group to discuss.

It was decided to put together a sub-committee to address the Drain Code concerns. Overmyer stated that he would chair the sub-committee and Smalligan volunteered to participate. It was also noted that Geerlings and Laninga should attend. Bodbyl-Mast voiced his concerns of creating this sub-committee without discussing it more and voting on it. He stated that everyone from REPA should be invited. It was noted that everyone from REPA would be invited and that the first session would be for information purposes only. Stypula stated that he would ask Bill Anderson of MTA and Tom Valley to speak at the meeting.

B. Membership

Zarzecki remarked that he thought it was a good idea to add Steve VanHoven as a member of REPA. He also noted that he did not like being classified under "other utility" members. He suggested changing/creating the category to something like "utility provider". Zarzecki also voiced that there is a disconnect in the bylaws between membership and function. He stated that he preferred to go back to the roles of MWSPA vs. REPA.

Koches reviewed REPA's membership list noting those that never attend the meetings and those that are no longer with their stated organization.

It was decided to revisit the membership categories and remove those people who do not attend the REPA monthly meetings. Smalligan suggested letting the Metro Council assign people to the new slots that we create.

C. Meeting Location

It was decided to continue holding the REPA meetings at the offices of GVMC for the time being.

5. Other Items of Business:

None

6. Future Agenda Items/Meeting Date:

The Regional Environmental Planning Agency meets the 4th Wednesday of every month at 9:00 am. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2004 at 9:00 AM at the offices of GVMC.

7. Adjournment:

With no other issues before the Regional Environmental Planning Agency, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.