

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Regional Environmental Planning Agency

Tuesday, August 24, 2004
10:00 AM

Kent County Road Commission
Grand Rapids, MI

Minutes

1. Call to Order:

Chair John Koches called the Regional Environmental Planning Agency to order at 10:05 AM. The following committee members were present:

Members Present:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Ray Bruggink | At-Large |
| Curt Kemppainen | Kent County, Public Works |
| John Koches | GVSU – Annis Water Resources Institute |
| Ken Krombeen | City of Grandville, City Manager |
| Roger Laninga | Kent County Drain Commission |
| Corky Overmyer | City of Grand Rapids – EPSD |
| Janice Tompkins | MDEQ, Surface Water Quality Division |

Members Absent:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Aaron Bodbyl-Mast | Ottawa County Planning & Grants |
| Paul Geerlings | Ottawa County Drain Commissioner |
| George Haga | Utility Advisory Board/Ada Township |
| Dale Kraker | Eastbrook Homes |
| Robb Meeuwsen | Zeeland Farm Services |
| Joe Stapf | City of Wyoming, Public Utilities |
| Ken Zarzecki | Ottawa County Road Commission |

Others Present:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Priscilla Martin | Grand Valley Metro Council |
| Jim Smalligan | Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr, & Huber |
| Don Stypula | Grand Valley Metro Council |

2. Minutes:

MOTION by Laninga, **SUPPORTED** by Bruggink, to approve the minutes for July 13, 2004. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Staff Updates:

A. Reorganization of MDEQ – Janice Tompkins

- Creation of the Office of Civil Enforcement Coordination
- Water Division is becoming water bureau
 - Created two divisions
 1. Field Operations
 2. Drinking Water

- Goal – Number of Managers increased to match number of people. Used to be about 1 manager to 25 – 30 people
- Mostly dealing with Lansing staff
- No decision made on grants program yet
- Meeting Friday, August 27th with Division Chiefs.
- Four people starting August 30th of which two include stormwater positions.
- Splitting the Geological and Land Management Division. Creating an Office of Geological Survey and a Land and Water management Division
- MDEQ reorganization memo available upon request.

B. FEMA Grant – Roger Laninga

- Laninga announced that they received a \$259,000 FEMA Grant which will allow them to reestablish floodplain elevations for approximately 25 miles of county drains inside Kent County

C. NPDES Phase II – Jim Smalligan

- The next meeting is scheduled for September 10th. Will be reviewing annual reports and looking at 2005 and 2006 activities.

D. GVMC – Urban Cooperation Board Grant – Don Stypula

- GVMC received \$75,000 from the Urban Cooperation board which was originally intended (along with other funding) for a Natural Resource staff member at GVMC.
- Unable to obtain other funding so requesting to retool the grant and put it toward continuing the Lower Grand Watershed study.
- Would like to establish a Lower Grand Watershed Council to make sure the report that was just complete does not sit on the shelf.

E. Rogue River Watershed Project – John Koches

- Working on Rogue river final project CMI
- Creating a boardwalk.

4. Work Session: Organization of REPA

Membership

- Overmyer to follow up on contacting the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum for potential REPA members.
- Stypula to follow up on contacting with the City Manger of Wayland and a Byron/Gaines Authority representative as possible REPA members.
- Stypula noted that he got some input from Ken Zarzecki. Ken would like to be involved in the Utilities/Stormwater portion of REPA.
- Kempainen remarked on Zarzecki's previous request to have Steve VanHoven added to REPA membership for the Ottawa County Road Commission. He noted that Ottawa County was organized differently then Kent County and stated that he didn't see a big problem to let Ottawa County have another membership slot added to the roster.
- Laninga noted that there are too many issues covered currently and not everyone attends agenda that don't relate to them.

Bylaws

- Tompkins stated that we need to re-work the functions in the bylaws because the current functions relate mainly to utilities. After the functions are re-worked the sub-committees should be created to fit the functions.
- Stypula volunteered to organize a utilities sub-committee.
- Tompkins noted that she would like to keep informed of what all the sub-committees are working on besides the quarterly meetings. It was suggested to distribute sub-committee agenda to all of REPA members.
- Bruggink noted that there would be overlap in the work of the sub-committees. Where do septage and bio-fuels fit in?
- Overmyer questioned how environmental issues would fit in.
- Overmyer questioned whether NKSA is still “alive” today. Stypula replied that there is still an authority but not sure about a treatment plant.
- Kemppainen suggested to first to find interest in REPA sub-committees and then worry about membership formality.
- Stypula stated that there has been talk about updating the Master Plan. Laninga questioned whether Byron/Gaines Authority and NKSA would be included? Kemppainen stated that in the past Grand Rapids, Grandville, and Wyoming have all pitched in funding for the plan. Kemppainen also noted that there would probably be overlap into Ottawa County.
- Overmyer stated that the City of Grand Rapids revisits their plan every five years. He stated that if others wanted to coordinate they might be open to that.
- Stypula stated that he and Tompkins would work on re-working the functions listed in the bylaws and have ready before the next REPA agenda went out. Tompkins suggested reviewing the short term and long term goals that were created for REPA a couple of years ago. Laninga suggested including what topics will be covered in each sub-committee which then will help determine the functions.
- Bruggink questioned Stypula if he would reflect the functions into membership and make recommendations. Stypula stated that he would.
- Draft bylaws to be attached to next agenda.
- Koches questioned the issue of a quorum. Should it be changed to the majority of members present since attendance seems to be low most of the time? Kemppainen stated there might be a problem with that if only a few people are making decisions for the region.
- Stypula also suggested re-tooling the operation procedures.
- Koches suggested revisiting the Conduct of Business regarding chair, vice chair, etc. and terms considering the current circumstance.

Meeting Dates – John Koches

- Will have quarterly meetings with presentations.
- Need executive committee to work out details.
- Sub-committees to be created for different REPA issues.
- Not ready for quarterly meetings yet.

5. Other Items of Business:

- Overmyer commented on several bills regarding septage:
 - HB 5771 & HB 5772
 - These bills would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act and the Code of Criminal Procedure, respectively, to increase and revise the regulation of septage disposal, set septage program fees, and establish sentencing guidelines for the crime of knowingly making a false report in a domestic septage licensing application.
 - Part 117 applies to septage collection and application
 - HB 6106
 - Establishes annual inspection for onsite disposal systems
 - Establishes fee
 - Requires certification of inspectors
- Stypula stated that he didn't see these bills going anywhere this year, but will probably be brought back next year.
- Tompkins noted that Ed White of the Grand Rapids Press in investigating septage and an article should be coming out soon.
- Stypula questioned why the Kent County Commissioners turned down the septage plan. Kemppainen stated that it only went as far as the leadership committee and got turned down there because there was not hard evidence of a current problem.
- Koches noted that that was what the septage plan was intended for – to come up with evidence and then correct the problem.
- Overmyer suggested a pilot project.
- Koches suggested coming up with a plan B for now.
- Tompkins noted that we are now in preventative mode – not in crisis mode. It will cost more if we wait until crisis mode.

6. Future Agenda Items/Meeting Date:

The Regional Environmental Planning Agency will meet next on Tuesday, September 28,, 2004 at the Kent County Road Commission at 10:00 am. Agenda items include bylaws review and executive committee.

7. Adjournment:

With no other issues before the Regional Environmental Planning Agency, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.