

**MINUTES**  
**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**  
**Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**January 18, 2008**

**Committee Members Present:** Steve Arbour, Rick Utech, Lori Dowling, Ed Zabinski, Shelly Steele

**Advisory members present:**

**Chamber Staff:** Bud Stone, President; Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant and Finance Coordinator

**Guests:** Chad Simons, Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge

Ed called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the November 30, 2007 minutes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Rich Utech made a motion to approve the November 30, 2007 meeting minutes. Steve Arbour seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

**STATE LEGISLATIVE CONFERCING**

Chad Simmons from Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge alerted the committee to some roadblocks he has encountered when trying to bid on State Conferences. Many times the Itasca County area is not allowed to bid on a conference. Chad is trying to get this resolved and was looking to the committee for support.

**ACTION:** Chad was asked to provide the committee with the state guidelines for their conference bids.

**MINNESOTA CHAMBER POLICIES**

Bud informed the committee that he received the draft copy of the Minnesota Chamber's legislative policies. It is available via email for anyone who would like a copy.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

**CONFERENCE CALL SCHEDULE**

The committee received a copy of the 2008 Minnesota Chamber legislative conference call schedule. The first conference call will be on Friday, February 22, 2008.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

**MESABI ENERGY HEARING**

Before any large power plant or transmission line can be built in Minnesota, the Public Utilities Commission first needs to issue permits that are based on a number of environmental, socioeconomic, and technical factors.

Bud informed the committee that there will be a public hearing on Tuesday, January 29, 2008, at the Taconite Community Center at 6 p.m. and in Hoyt Lakes on Wednesday, January 30, 2008 at 6 p.m. Regarding permitting for the Mesaba Energy Project.

**ACTION:** If available, plan to attend a public hearing to show support.

### **MEMBER UPDATES**

Bud updated the committee regarding the County Administrator/Coordinator position by reading an email he received from Commission McLynn. The email read, "County board is moving forward with filling the coordinator position having determined that it is needed full time. There will be some changes in duties in hopes of expanding role to include proactive involvement in economic development and planning. Administrator is not an option at this time; no support expressed".

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

Steve Arbour informed the committee about developing a Hospice House that he and his wife have been working on. Steve also alerted the committee to some legislative issues he had been dealing with regarding government funding of those who will be utilizing the Hospice House.

### **LEGISLATIVE DINNER**

Bud informed the committee that this year the Chamber will have three tables at the Legislative Dinner on February 12, 2008.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

### **SEED (STRATEGIC ENTREPREUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)**

Bud brought to the committees attention that a portion of SEED may offer us an opportunity to support the Governor at the legislature as SEED is one of his priority projects.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

### **CLEAN WATER LEGACY**

Rick Utech informed the committee that the Clean Water Legacy received the grant to open the testing lab at Itasca Community College.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting will be at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, February 22, 2008. The first Minnesota State Chamber legislative conference call will be on February 22, 2008.