

**Government Affairs**  
**Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**February 18, 2011**

**Chamber Members Present:** Margie Ritter, Mike Ives, Derek Stanley, Mary Ives, Susan Harper, Shawn Gillen, Steve Arbour, Steve Frohrip, Lilah Crowe, Joe Broking, Jake Goering, Roger Hoyum, Allison Rajala Ahcan

**Advisory Members Present:**

**Chamber Staff President:** Bud Stone, Renee Thompson

Jake called the meeting to order.

**MINNESOTA CHAMBER CONFERENCE CALL**

The committee participated in a legislative conference call with the Minnesota Chamber.

Updates were heard on environmental permitting, education, healthcare, transportation, nuclear moratorium, and changing the income tax brackets.

March 25, 2011 is the deadline for all finance bills. The first policy deadline is April 29<sup>th</sup>. The second policy deadline is May 6, 2011.

**ACTION:** The next MN Chamber conference call will be on Friday, March 4, 2011.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Jake asked for a motion to approve the January 28, 2011 meeting minutes.

Margie made a motion to approve the January 28, 2011 Government Affairs Committee minutes. Steve Arbour seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

**MINNESOTA CHAMBER FEDERATION DISCUSSION**

Bud provided the committee with a handout outlining the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's Federation that the Minnesota Chamber would like us to be a part of.

Bud reviewed the handout with the committee.

Mike Ives asked if there was a cost to being in the Federation. The answer was "No".

After committee discussion, Roger Hoyum made a motion to recommend the Chamber Board accept the invitation to join the Federation. Steve Arbour seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**ACTION:** The committee's recommendation will be brought to the February 28, 2011 board meeting.

## **CONFERENCE CALL WITH REPRESENTATIVE MCELFRICK**

Representative McElfrick called in for a legislative conference call with the committee.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

## **RANGE REGIONAL AIRPORT**

Bud reviewed an email with the committee that he received from Shawn Germolus, Executive Director of the Range Regional Airport.

The email explained that the airline service at the airport is currently subsidized by the US DOT under the Essential Air Service program. Senator McCain and Senator Colburn have amendments that would cut the EAS program funding. If this program ends, it is expected that the airline services will terminate at the Range Regional Airport.

On February 17, the Senate rejected an amendment offered by Senator McCain to repeal the Essential Air Service Program.

Bud wanted to make the committee aware of this as it may resurface at anytime.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

## **MEMBER UPDATES**

Steve informed the committee he has been working on the Governor's Fishing Opener event.

Lilah informed the committee that Public Utilities will be offering the bill rounding program. Half the money raised in the program will go to the Historical Society and half will go to the Community Foundation.

Joe reported that they are working on eleven different projects. The projects have the potential to provide a large number of future jobs.

Roger spoke about the economic growth happening in North Dakota.

Steve Frohrip reported that Mediacom is finishing up on two of their major projects in the next 60 days.

Shawn spoke about the League of MN Cities board meeting he attended, that he met with Senator Saxhaug regarding the local option sales tax and that he will be participating in the Polar Plunge on March 12, 2011.

Allison discussed the Blandin Foundations 2011 initiatives.

**ACTION:** No further action necessary.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is on March 4, 2011 at 7:30 a.m.

There will be a MN Chamber conference call.

Mike made a motion to adjourn. Mary seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant and Finance Coordinator.