

Government Affairs
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
March 18, 2011

Chamber Members Present: Shawn Gillen, Terry Snyder, Irene Koski, Kyle Erickson, Mary Ives, Mike Ives, Susan Harper

Advisory Members Present: Commissioner Catherine McLynn

Chamber Staff President: Bud Stone, Renee Thompson

Shawn called the meeting to order.

MINNESOTA CHAMBER CONFERENCE CALL

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

The following updates were heard during the Minnesota Chamber conference call:

- Environmental: Finance bills to the Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee are due in one week.
- Energy: working on repealing the coal moratorium.
- Education: Education is moving at a fast pace.
- Health & Human Services: discussion regarding the Health Insurance Exchange.
- Transportation: The budget bill will be introduced today.

ACTION: The next MN Chamber conference call will be on Friday, April 1, 2011.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Shawn asked for a motion to approve the March 4, 2011 meeting minutes.

Mike made a motion to approve the March 4, 2011 Government Affairs Committee minutes. Irene seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

CONFERENCE CALL WITH REPRESENTATIVE MCELFRICK

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

ACTION: No further action necessary.

HIGHWAY 38 UPDATE

Commissioner McLynn gave an update on the Highway 38 project. MNDOT has moved the project date up to 2017. The project will bring Highway 38 to 10-ton capacity and will provide restructuring and preservation. Safety is a main concern.

Soil borings will take place this summer. A video log was done on March 16, 2011.

Surveying and mapping money is needed.

ACTION: The committee will send a letter to RAC requesting funding for surveying and mapping.

MEMBER UPDATES

Irene informed the committee that she will be retiring from the County at the end of May. She made a recommendation to the County Board to make her position a County Administrator Position rather than a Coordinator Position. The recommendation will be voted on at the Tuesday County board meeting.

Mike spoke about how yesterday's power outage has made them analyze things at their lodging facilities and make some changes in preparation for any future long-term power outages.

Susan reported that Cohasset's emergency procedures worked well during Thursday's power outage.

Susan also informed the committee about a new brochure outlining recreational activities in Cohasset.

Bud reported that he sent a letter to Steve Welliver regarding the PUC deposits and that he also attended the meeting. The PUC is willing to look into the utility deposit issue.

Bud spoke about some issues that were brought to his attention regarding "claw back" time with dental insurance.

Catherine spoke about ARDC working with North Span to provide business loans and the current animal control issues.

Kyle spoke about AEOA funding cuts and that they will be experiencing layoffs as a result.

Terry spoke about things going well during the power outage and wanted to bring the committee's attention to HF 1033. The bill title is "Short term commitments of 180 days or less reauthorized to be served in county jails".

Shawn spoke about the League of MN Cities and proposed PERA payment shifts.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is on April 1, 2011 at 7:30 a.m.

There will be a MN Chamber conference call.

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

Submitted by Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant and Finance Coordinator.