

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
September 25, 2009

Committee Members Present: Jim Millis, Steve Arbour, Leigh Lonson, Frank Allen, Josh Hafer, Jake Goering, Peter McDermott, Irene Koski, Margie Ritter

Advisory members present: Catherine McLynn

Present via Conference Call:

Chamber Staff: Bud Stone, Renee Thompson

Jake Goering called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Steve Arbour made a motion to approve the August 28, 2009 meeting minutes. Margie Ritter seconded the motion. Motion carries.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

EETC MEETING RECAP

Bud attended the US Chamber's Employment, Education and Training Committee meeting in Washington, D.C. on September 21-23, 2009 and met with Jim Oberstar's staff, Al Franken's staff, Amy Klobuchar's staff and Ron Eideshaug from the US Chamber.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

2010 LOBBYIST

The committee discussed hiring a lobbyist again for 2010. The committee feels there is value in the Chamber having a lobbyist.

Frank Allen made a motion to hire a lobbyist for 2010. Jim Millis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ACTION: Bud will budget in a lobbyist when preparing the Chamber's 2010 budget for board approval.

CITY/COUNTY AIRPORT JPA

Commissioner McLynn explained to the committee that in the interest of reducing costs and duplication of services the City and County are working on a new joint powers agreement for the airport.

ACTION: Catherine will forward the new JPA to Bud when she gets the updated copy.

WMMPB

Catherine informed the committee that she has resigned from the WMMPB.

The WMMPB consists of 13 entities trying to come to an agreement on how to deal with the Canisteo Mine Pit overflow issue.

The legislature allocated 3.5 million dollars to the DNR to handle the overflow issue. However, the WMMPB and the DNR cannot agree on the same solution, so nothing is getting done.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

CONFERENCE CALL WITH RON EIDESHAUG

Ron Eideshaug, U.S. Chamber lobbyist, phoned in for a conference call to discuss the US Chamber's policy position on the Healthcare Reform and Climate Change bills.

Ron explained that according to the U.S. Chamber, the most important principles in drafting a climate bill legislatively is whether the bill will:

1. Impact jobs and the economy;
2. be international in scope;
3. promote technologies;
4. promote energy efficiency, and
5. reduce barriers to clean energy deployment.

The U.S. Chamber is not confident that the House's bill 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) meets all the principles they are looking for.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

MEMBER UPDATES

Catherine reported that the ESSAR land exchange is still in the works. Currently, ESSAR has requested a delay. Catherine also spoke about her concerns with Mount Itasca and about the 6 million dollar renovation for Grand Village that was approved and the new substation.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, October 30, 2009.

Meeting adjourned.

Meeting minutes submitted by Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant, Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.