

Community Collaboration Work Group
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2013 – 7:30 a.m.
Room 310 - County Administration Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: County Commissioner Jim Saalfeld (Chair); Grand Rapids City Commissioner Rosalynn Bliss (Vice-Chair); President of the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce Rick Baker; Attorney Jim Brown; Grand Rapids Township Supervisor Mike DeVries; County Commissioners Carol Hennessy and Dan Koorndyk; President & CEO of the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan Martha Gonzalez-Cortes; Grand Valley State University Professor of Economics Paul Isely; Walker City Manager Cathy Vander Meulen

MEMBERS ABSENT: President & CEO of The Right Place, Inc. Birgit Klohs; County Commissioner Michael Wawee Jr; Grand Rapids City Commissioner Jim White

ALSO PRESENT: County Administrator/Controller Daryl Delabbio; Executive Assistant to the Board Jamie Groom; Grand Rapids City Manager Greg Sundstrom; County Management Analyst Jen DeHaan; Director of Government and Community Affairs, West Michigan Policy Forum Megan Wells

Mr. Saalfeld called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

I. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes from the March 6, 2013, meeting were reviewed and approved.

II. **REVIEW OF EDITS TO THE FINAL REPORT**

Mr. Saalfeld explained that he made some edits to the Executive Summary of the report. No objections were given to his edits by the Work Group.

Mr. Saalfeld then led the Work Group through the report reviewing edits made as a result of suggestions at the March 6, 2013, meeting.

Ms. Gonzalez-Cortes suggested that the reference to The Right Place, Inc. being “extraordinarily successful...” (in Section VII.C.1.) should include information, or a link to information, which supports this statement.

Mr. DeVries said that The Right Place, Inc. is the State-sanctioned economic development group for the West Michigan region. This should somehow be added to this section.

Ms. Vander Meulen made a motion to accept the report as written (with minor edits to be made) today, March 20, 2013. Ms. Hennessy supported her motion and the Work Group unanimously voted to accept the motion.

Mr. Sundstrom feels that it should be incumbent upon this group to plan for implementation of the recommendations in the report. He feels that because of its overarching jurisdiction, the County should be the central coordinator.

III. NEXT STEPS

Mr. Saalfeld explained that the CCWG's report will go to the Collaboration/Cooperation Subcommittee of the County Board. The Subcommittee is planning to meet at 9:30 am on Thursday, March 28, 2013. After the report is accepted by the County Board, it will be rolled out publicly. The CCWG had a specific charge, which is stated at the beginning of the report, that does not include implementation. After today's meeting, the CCWG will have completed its work. Because it is a County report, it is incumbent upon the County to oversee and promote the implementation of the report's recommendations.

Mr. Baker said that the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce would like to have a presentation about the report's findings. He suggested that the Work Group make a recommendation to the County to form an implementation subcommittee.

Ms. Bliss suggested dividing the recommendations out to groups who would be best to oversee implementation of each. Groups would meet with the County and touch base on perhaps a quarterly basis.

Mr. Baker said he would like to have a central leader for all partners.

Mr. Saalfeld agreed and said the County could keep track of all implementation.

Mr. Sundstrom said that since the report has already hit the media, the big news will lie in what the County plans to do with implementation. An implementation plan is important to make it clear to the community that there is going to be ongoing attention to the implementation process.

Mr. DeVries moved to recommend to the Collaboration/Cooperation Subcommittee of the Board of Commissioners to develop a process to implement the recommendations included within the Final Report. The Work Group unanimously supported the motion.

Ms. Vander Meulen asked if Mr. Saalfeld anticipates he will be available to do a presentation regarding the report. Mr. Saalfeld responded that the County would accept invitations and accommodate requests based on who it feels would be best to speak to the requesting organization.

Mr. Koorndyk suggested the creation of a PowerPoint to aid in presentations.

Mr. Saalfeld said he believes the Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) will want to have a presentation.

Mr. Sundstrom suggested that the County present at a GVMC meeting where members of the legislature would be invited to get the word out; this is the level of what other groups do. He also recommends meeting with the Governor's Office staff.

Mr. Saalfeld suggested a copy of the report be given to Amy Banninga, State Business Ombudsmen for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Mr. Baker suggested that only a small number of presenters be designated to maintain a consistent message.

Ms. Bliss said she would like to brief the City Commission.

Ms. Gonzalez-Cortes requested talking points for members of this Work Group who are contacted by media; it would be helpful. She anticipates having to translate the findings into other languages, and a guide of areas to focus on would be helpful.

Mr. Baker shared his compliments to Chair Saalfeld and Vice-Chair Bliss for keeping this Work Group focused and on-track.

Mr. Saalfeld returned the compliment to everyone on the Work Group for giving an honest effort across the table to get the recommendations out.

Mr. Delabbio said that he feels the GVMC should be actively engaged in implementation.

Mr. Sundstrom suggested a dedicated staff person at the GVMC to handle implementation.

Revisions will be sent out to the Work Group as soon as the final revisions are made.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS/OPEN ITEMS

None.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Megan Wells, Director of Government and Community Affairs at the West Michigan Policy Forum, introduced herself. She can tell that there has been a lot of hard work and thought put into the report. She said that Mr. Sundstrom and Mr. Baker serve on her board, and she is looking forward to getting this message out to legislators and the community.

Mr. Saalfeld asked her to provide language from the West Michigan Policy Forum's conference this summer. She will forward this language to him.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Saalfeld adjourned the meeting at 8:15 a.m.