



**CITY OF YPSILANTI
BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON CITY FINANCES
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 2, 2005
Lower Level Meeting Room
6:30 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER –

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chairperson Paul Tait.

II. ROLL CALL –

Present: Paul Tait, James Hawkins, Deborah Strong (by speaker phone),
Peter Fletcher, Frederick Davis, Thomas Biggs, Ingrid Kock

Absent: Timothy Robinson, Steve Pierce (arrived 6:45), Christian Overland

Motion by Frederick Davis to excuse the absences of Timothy Robinson, Steve Pierce and Christian Overland. Supported by Peter Fletcher. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES –

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2005

Motion by Thomas Biggs to approve the minutes. Motion supported by Frederick Davis.

Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION –

There were no presentations.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no audience participation.

VI. INFORMATION/REQUESTS BY THE COMMITTEE

A. Update on Regionalization - Chairman Paul Tait informed the committee that an update on Regionalization is still forthcoming. He stated that further clarification is needed before moving forward.

James Hawkins stated that he and Steve Pierce attended a meeting with the chairman of the County Board of Commissioners. The chairman provided a portfolio of the Washtenaw Metro Alliance. They are discussing the county acting as facilitator. He felt there was no City representation at these discussions.

Ed Koryzno stated that both he and Council Member John Gawlas have attended those meetings on a regular basis.

B. Review of Results of Other Plante Moran Income Tax Studies – The Committee discussed the status of the Plante Moran Income Tax Study.

James Hawkins stated that his general impression was that the results of the other studies confirm that we made a good choice as far as the study was concerned. He said that it also gives us a better sense of what we should be expecting in our report.

Chairman Tate said that last Friday he spoke with a Mt. Clemens council member. According to him, they have pulled their income tax proposal temporarily. The reason was that they felt that they had not done enough research to fully justify an income tax. Chairman Tate felt that we will be ahead of the game based on the fact that we have spent as much time as we have on our research.

Steve Pierce again requested an electronic copy of Plante Moran's reports.

Ingrid Kock stated her surprise that Mayor Farmer didn't feel optimistic about an income tax as a realistic option for the city.

Ed Koryzno told the committee that we will get a finished preliminary report. However, we are still waiting for the data from treasury. He believed it would be around the middle of April that we would receive the finished report.

VII. DISCUSSION/ACTIONS BY THE COMMITTEE

A. Status of the Budget – Ed Koryzno provided the committee an update on the City's budget. Just had the first meeting with department heads today, March 2, 2005. He should know by this Friday whether there will be any need for a rollback in the General Fund. The governor has proposed in her budget to keep State Shared Revenues at their current level. The governor has also proposed increasing the fire protection grants, which is the money we receive to provide fire protection to Eastern Michigan University. He is presenting the budget to Council on May 1st.

B. Ingrid Kock's Committee Report – Ingrid Kock provided an overview of the Emergency Medical System Subcommittee. She feels that there is a need to investigate the billing practices of HVA to see if they are billing patients for

runs that the Fire Department is actually making. She also discussed investigating grants for upgrading the Fire Department staff. She stated that the committee recommends that new hires to the Fire Department be fully certified.

James Hawkins asked if the subcommittee had investigated whether Ypsilanti Township (with a larger population base) had exactly the same type of setup. He asked whether their Fire Department has the ambulance service that goes in tandem with HVA?

Ingrid Kock answered that the committee had not really looked into that but that she assumes that they do.

Mr. Hawkins stated his concern for what looked like possible duplication.

It was discussed by the committee the cost-effectiveness of changing from HVA to firefighter service vs. the effectiveness of the service to the community. It was brought out that it would not be cost-effective to change to firefighter service trained in first system response but that it would be a greater service to the community.

It was discussed which services would be dispatched as a first responder under different types of circumstances. It was decided that the City would come first, but the Township would show up as a first responder if Ypsilanti City called from an area outside the City.

Steve Pierce suggested, not supplanting HVA, but augmenting what HVA is already doing.

It was stated that the cost would be too high.

Chairman Tait suggested placing this item on the agenda for the next meeting to continue the discussion.

Steve Pierce asked if it would be possible to join the HVA network if the City is able to provide ambulance transport at a per unit cost that is cheaper than HVA.

Frederick Davis stated his opinion that this couldn't be done.

Further discussion followed.

VIII. FUTURE MEETING

A. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Agenda Items

1. Discuss/Continue EMS Report
2. Regionalization Study
3. County Plan
4. Update/Status Income Tax
5. Update City Buildings – Ed Koryzno
6. SEMCOG Infrastructure in the 7 County Area

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.