

**Grand Vision
Coordinating Group
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2007**

Members Present

Alan Cooper
Virginia Coulter
John Cartwright
Gary Derrigan
Tom Emling
Kathleen Guy
Glen Lile
Jim Lively
John Nelson
Bob Otwell
Mary Pitcher
Linda Racine
Rise Rasch
Sheridan Rhoads
Derith Smith
Linda Smyka
Mary Tonneberger
Lee Wilson

Public Present (from sign-in sheet)

Dennis Aloia
June Thaden
Jack Kelly

Facilitators Present

Linda Racine

Staff Present

Sarah Lucas
Matt Skeels

Doug Christianson
John Fregonese
Lynn Wilson

1. Welcome, introductions, & facilitator comments

L. Racine welcomed everyone and explained the agenda.

2. Review proposed December 6, 2007 agenda

The agenda was accepted by consensus.

3. Review November 2007 meeting minutes

The minutes were accepted by consensus.

4. The Grand Vision Consultant Update

- a. **Grand Vision Timeline through July 1, 2008**
- b. **January Scenario Planning Workshops**

John Fregonese of Fregonese and Associates presented preliminary results from the October 17 workshop. He noted that all the information from that workshop, including maps, comments, etc., is being compiled and will be posted online. He discussed the timeline for the remaining 5 workshops. One will cover Traverse City specifically, another will cover a village; and a third will address the urban/rural interface. There will also be a scenario planning workshop held in February, specific to transportation.

5. Public Involvement Team Report

T. Emling updated that Leadership Grand Traverse has been working with the Public Involvement Committee to help with citizen engagement; they have been focused on outreach that will both invite and encourage more participation from the public. Among the opportunities they see are an expanded survey that would accompany the Harris Interactive random sample survey, as well as a direct-mail postcard to every household in the 6-county region, which would include a message explaining the study and invite participation. He noted that the Public Involvement Committee is hoping for a lot of public participation in the “vote” on the scenarios; we’d like to have a timeline for the process in order to help inform the public and invite them to be a part of the process. D. Christianson added that the consultants are working on a newsletter, with assistance from the Public Involvement Committee, which is scheduled to go out in mid-December.

6. Grand Vision Outreach and Market Discussion

V. Coulter expressed concern about the project’s advertising component and asked what the budget and marketing plan involve. We need people at the scenario planning workshops; there needs to be communication. J. Lively stated that we got great participation at the first workshop without much advertising; he feels we can continue to do well with earned media, i.e. newspapers, radio, etc. He referred to the direct-mail piece discussed by the PIC; this may be more effective than advertising as it would reach every household in the region, and it could probably be done for about \$7,000.

T. Emling indicated that there has been discussion on forming a “Friends of the Grand Vision” nonprofit; he and some others have met with the Grand Traverse Community Foundation to discuss this option and it appears that there may be ways to work this out with the foundation. He added that there’s a lot of potential for outreach amongst the champions’ networks; and the consultants have been presenting to various service groups such as Kiwanis and Rotary. If we were able to get representatives from each of these service groups to get involved and keep their groups up-to-date, we’d really be expanding our communication network.

A. Cooper stated that the awareness in Wexford County is very low among the local government and the public. There won’t be a lot of participation there if people aren’t aware of what the project is.

Members and consultants discussed online communications as an outreach tool. June Thaden suggested using the State Theatre as a means of advertising or as a location for a presentation. J. Fregonese stated that the theatre would probably be a very good option when we’re looking for feedback on the scenarios.

J. Lively referred to the direct mail piece and asked if we would be able to redirect funds from the newsletter in order to finance the direct mail – for instance, if we did 3 newsletters instead of 4, and used the extra money to pay for the direct mail. M. Skeels stated that he believes that would entail a contract amendment, but he would check with MDOT.

7. Expanding the Grand Vision Report

B. Otwell updated the group on the current status of the expanding the geography of the current scope of work to include contiguous counties to Grand Traverse County. There appears to be support for expanding the scope of work from both TALUS and the counties themselves. The costs for expanding the scope would be about \$240,000. It's not clear whether or not MDOT will be able to assist with funding. TALUS has sent a letter to MDOT requesting assistance and indicating that there is justification for expanding the scope based on the results of the origin and destination study conducted this fall.

8. RFP/Fundraising Subcommittee Report and Proposal

a. Allocation of Coordinating Group Funds

9. Fundraising Strategy Discussion

M. Skeels stated that if the federal language is changed, 80% of costs would be covered; we would need 20% local match, which is roughly \$50,000. B. Otwell stated that there needs to be a commitment in place for an expanded contract by January 31. J. Lively reviewed discussion at the RFP/Fundraising Committee meeting last week and presented a possible fundraising strategy to cover expenses for the expanded contract, working under the assumption that the federal funding is not available. The consultants have given us an estimate of \$241,000 for expanding the contract; he feels that the amount can be negotiated to \$200,000. Advocacy may result in up to \$100,000 in funding from MDOT, which leaves \$100,000 for us to provide locally. Several local groups such as Rotary, Munson, and the Grand Traverse Band, have been supportive of the project and could be approached for financial support. This may add another \$50,000 to \$75,000; which would leave \$25,000 to \$50,000 – or \$5,000 to \$10,000 each – among the five counties.

M. Tonneberger asked, if not all of the counties participated, will the costs of the study go down? B. Otwell replied that the costs do not go down proportionally due to economies of scale. M. Tonneberger asked if nonparticipating counties would receive any deliverables. J. Lively indicated that workshops would not be held in those counties although they may receive some information. M. Tonneberger indicated that it will be important to emphasize the difference in deliverables when presenting the request for funding.

M. Pitcher expressed concern that because TALUS oversees the contract, they will be asking the counties for funding; however, there is no representation from these counties on the TALUS board. The counties may not look favorably on giving money to an organization in which they have no decision-making capacity. R. Rasch stated that since TALUS isn't a true MPO, there may be room to include these counties as representatives on the board.

A. Cooper stated that the Wexford County Board will need to be prepped on details of the study before any action is requested. S. Lucas indicated that presentations will be made to all county boards within the next two weeks to review the project and issues regarding the expanded scope of work. No action will be requested until January.

J. Lively referred to the \$12,000 in the coordinating group's fund at the Traverse City Chamber Foundation, and presented a proposal to use \$10,000 of that money to contribute to the expanding the geographic scope of work. B. Otwell stated that because the money came from nonprofits, most of which have a regional scope, he feels it would be appropriate to use this money to improve the study by expanding it regionally.

J. Nelson asked, what other needs are there for this money; and, if the contract scope is not expanded, will the money remain in the budget? J. Lively answered that the money would not be used if the scope does not change.

J. Kelly referred to the direct-mail outreach for the 6-county region and indicated his understanding that this money could be used for that purpose. He feels that such outreach would be a goodwill gesture in those counties in encouraging participation; perhaps \$7,000 should remain in the budget for that activity. That would leave \$5,000 that could be used as a contribution towards the expanded contract.

The following proposal was consented to:

That the Grand Vision Coordinating Group authorizes the allocation of \$5,000 from their fund at the TC Chamber Foundation for the purposes of expanding the geographic scope of the Grand Vision.

B.Otwell indicated there is not a clear strategy on fundraising among local groups. M. Tonneberger suggested asking the Grand Traverse Band for a substantial amount as the study is very relevant to their region. She noted that the application deadline is in December, and decisions are made mid-January; applications need to be approved by a government body. Members discussed scenarios for submitting an application; M. Skeels and B. Otwell indicated that TALUS could submit the application, with possible approval from Grand Traverse County.

J. Lively referred to a possible investment loan from Rotary, which may be available if we had an organization that could commit to repaying the loan. This could allow us to get the contract moving. Members felt the champions group may be a source for ideas for possible funding.

9. **New business**

None.

10. **Announcements**

None.

11. **Meeting evaluation**

12. **Set Subcommittee meeting times**

RFP: 12/10/07, 3-5 p.m. @ NWMCOG offices

Agenda: 1/9, 8:30-10:30 @ NWMCOG offices

Coordinating Group: 1/15, 10-11 a.m. @ Location TBD

13. **Public comment**

None

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.
