

GRAND RIVER INC.

Board Meeting Notes

July 27, 2022, 3:00 – 4:30 PM

1. Call to Order – Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 3:00PM

Attendance

Members Present: Brian Harris, Bo Torres, Linda MacDonald, Traci Montgomery, Al Vanderberg, Kayem Dunn, Mark Washington, Megan Rydecki, Ron Yob, Sam Moore, Chris Muller

Members Absent: Tom Welch

Others Present: Andy Guy, Mark Miller, DGRI

2. Approve Meeting Minutes from June 8, 2022

Motion: Ms. Rydecki, supported by Ms. Dunn, moved approval of the June 8, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. DRAFT Terms of Agreement: Grand River Inc. & Downtown GR Inc.

Mr. Guy provided an overview of the draft terms sheet.

He also presented a proposed schedule for consideration and approval:

- July 25 – Governance Committee reviews draft terms
- July 27 – GRI Board of Directors reviews draft terms
- Aug 3 – DGRI Executive Committee reviews draft terms
- Aug 22 – GRI Governance Committee reviews final draft
- Sept 7 – DGRI Executive Committee review draft
- Late Aug/Early Sept – GRI board considers final draft
- Sept 21 – DGRI Board of Advisors considers final draft

Manager Washington observed the draft terms state that GRI commits to engage staff or contract assistance to support this work and highlighted the importance of moving to identify the dedicated staff capacity.

Mr. Guy stated the Development & Finance Committee is working up a preliminary 3-year budget that anticipates funding for staff support.

Mr. Washington encouraged consideration of staff support specifically dedicated to fund development.

Mr. Winn observed the draft terms state DGRI will play a role in raising additional funding for capital projects but the terms do not clearly detail a similar role for Grand River Inc. Mr. Winn stated determining how the organizations work together to support the fundraising needs, and where that responsibility ultimately sits, is important to more clearly define moving forward.

Mr. Harris stated that we continue to learn what fundraising specifically means on Greenway project-by-project basis. And that one role Grand River Inc might play is identifying priority projects and serving as “matchmaker” for those projects and funders.

Mr. Winn asked if the proposed Greenway Project Advisory Committee would play a fundraising role.

Ms. Montgomery stated that, as currently proposed, the advisory committee does not include a fundraising responsibility.

Administrator Vanderberg emphasized that fundraising will happen in a variety of different ways, and ultimately is an ‘all hands on deck’ effort. He stated what’s needed is a more structured approach to ensure fundraising happens in a coordinated and effective manner.

Mr. Guy stated each Greenway-related project is different and unique case. The Greenway project discovery process currently underway will help inform future fundraising needs as well as potential structure and responsibility.

Mr. Harris recommended clearly identifying “fundraising” as role of Grand River Inc.

Ms. Rydecki observed that the draft terms currently qualify the DGRI fundraising role as “as needed.” She encouraged maintaining flexibility in the language so the terms/agreement can accommodate an adaptive approach as we learn more about projects.

Mr. Winn inquired if the term of the agreement might be better extended from January 2025 to January 2026 to keep consistent with the timeline of the Greenway grant deadlines.

General agreement to keep a 2025 deadline to communicate the sense of urgency for action.

Mr. Muller encouraged advancing on the proposed Authority sooner rather than later to further support fundraising and stewardship goals.

Mr. Harris agreed.

Ms. Montgomery observed the draft terms, and the proposed Agreement, focus specifically on the Greenway grant and organizing. She asked if we possibly need other agreements to acknowledge other organizational work underway, such as the Equity Framework process.

Mr. Guy stated potential future agreements that formally define partnerships around priority areas of work could serve to build the credibility of and confidence in effort underway.

4. Greenway Project Technical Advisory Committee

Mr. Guy overviewed the draft framework for a proposed Greenway Project Technical Advisory Committee.

He stated the work will be supported by Kennari Consulting, Guidehouse consulting and a proposed Project Manager hire.

Mr. Vanderberg encouraged revising the Purpose statement to expressly state the goal of “integrating” Greenway-related community plans into a common plan for action.

Mr. Harris inquired about the potential schedule or any key milestones for the proposed Committee’s initial work.

Mr. Guy stated the goal is to get the Committee formed and hold a kickoff meeting by end of September 2022. He also stated the goal is to have a draft Priority Plan for Action by Q1 of 2023.

Mr. Harris asked if the purpose necessitates formally establishing a Committee of the Board versus, for example, simply establishing a group of staff from partner organizations.

Ms. Dunn encouraged establishing a Committee of the Board, with Board approval and delegated responsibility to carry out its purpose.

Mr. Harris inquired how the full Board might keep informed of the Committee’s work.

Mr. Guy suggested process updates could come to the Board through various communication channels. The proposed Committee framework also suggests appointing a Grand River Inc Board member to serve on the Committee and serve as liaison to the full Board.

Ms. Montgomery inquired about the expected meeting cadence for the proposed Committee. The framework suggests monthly meetings to start.

Mr. Guy invited Board members to review the proposed Committee attributes and bring forward any ideas for prospective candidates.

Ms. Montgomery encouraged inclusion of an equity/community impact perspective.

Mr. Winn encouraged the Committee to help identify a requirement or criteria for individual project sustainability, ie potentially a budget for long-term maintenance costs.

5. Coordinating Committee

Mr. Harris opened the discussion with the observation that Grand River Inc has a growing body of work, led by a number of committees and consultants, but we lack a formal mechanism – outside of regular Board meetings – to promote coordination across those efforts.

Mr. Harris stated that Grand River Inc remains in start up phase, and its perhaps a bit premature to establish an Executive Committee.

Mr. Harris suggested formation of a Coordinating Committee, potentially the Chairs of existing Committees, to support coordination and information exchange.

Mr. Moore inquired if staff keeps minutes of Committee meetings, and whether those notes could be shared out to help keep the broader Board aware of effort underway and updates.

Ms. Dunn stated Committee meeting minutes are kept, as required by the bylaws. The practice has been to share those out in full Board meeting packets, as timing and approval of the minutes allows.

Mr. Moore inquired if those minutes could be shared out more immediately in the wake of a particular Committee meeting.

Ms. Montgomery suggested the full Board could receive Committee reports more consistently at Board meetings.

Administrator Vanderberg inquired if there was a technological solution (drop box, share point, google, etc) to make organizational info more readily available.

Ms. Montgomery stated, as Secretary, one of her goals is to develop a recommendation for organizing and maintaining Board materials for reference.

Mr. Washington acknowledged the importance of good communication and coordination during the organizational startup phase.

Mr. Harris suggest the effort would be an ad hoc, short-term way for intentional two-way communication among Committee leaders to help “put the synapses together and see if we spark.”

Ms. Dunn suggested the Board Chair could call an informal meeting of Chairs to assess the value of meeting.

Ms. Montgomery reiterated value of Committee reports at full Board meetings.

6. Staff Report

Andy Guy reviewed a written staff report. (Attached)

7. Board Member Discussion

Ms. Dunn encouraged Board Members to sign the Conflict of Interest Statement at their tables.

Mr. Torres reported the initial community Listening Sessions for the Equity Framework process have been very well attended and participants are bringing a range of priorities and ideas. He thanked Administrator Vanderberg for attending the session at LINC UP.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 PM.

Staff / Project Updates July 2022

Development & Finance Committee

- Discussed preliminary 3-year budget & staffing strategy (July 14, 2022)
- Next meets August 11, 2022

Communications & Engagement Committee

- Hosted Organizational Branding Workshop (July 13, 2022)
- Next meets August 19, 2022

Governance Committee

- Discussed draft Terms for Greenway partnership with DGRI, framework for Greenway Project Technical Advisory Committee and overall organizational Committee structure (July 25, 2022)
- Next meets August 22, 2022

Projects

Equity Framework

- Approximately 50-60 people attended first Community Listening Session at LINC UP (July 14, 2022)
- Advisory group met July 21, 2022 to discuss model Equity Framework documents, a vision statement & key priority areas of focus
 - Next meets August 18, 2022
- Upcoming Community Listening Sessions:
 - El Centro Hispano (in Spanish) August 10, 2022
 - Virtual session September 8, 2022

Greenway Grant Project Organizing

- Greenway project discovery/inventory process approximately 80% complete (Kennari Consulting)
- Engaged Guidehouse firm to support prospective project evaluation, state grant reporting, compliance
- Developing start-up process for proposed Greenway Project Technical Advisory Committee
- Start Project Agreement talks with Michigan DNR August 4, 2022

Key River-Related Project Updates

Restore the Whitewater Rapids in the Grand River

- Lead: Grand Rapids Whitewater in partnership with the City of Grand Rapids
- Revised state (EGLE) permit application submitted July 22, 2022

Lyon Square Opportunity Site

- Lead: Downtown Grand Rapids Inc in partnership with the City of Grand Rapids, Convention/Arena Authority and Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
- Revised state (EGLE) permit application submitted to EGLE July 26, 2022

Grand Rapids Public Museum Opportunity Site (river edge, trail and greenspace enhancements)

- Lead: GR Public Museum in partnership with City of Grand Rapids
- Revised state (EGLE) permit application submitted by early August 2022

- Secured \$11M appropriation in state budget

Amphitheater (201 Market Opportunity Site)

- Lead: Convention/Arena Authority in partnership w/ Grand Action, City of Grand Rapids, DGRI
- CAA holds option on property, anticipated to close by 2022 year end
- Secured \$30M appropriation in state budget

Leonard-to-Ann River Edge Trail Connection

- Lead: City of Grand Rapids with fundraising support from West MI Trails & Greenway Coalition
- State (EGLE) permit application expected to be submitted by end August 2022

Sixth Street/Canal Park Opportunity Sites

- Lead: City of Grand Rapids
- Finalizing new Parks Master Plan and preparing Construction Documents

Ah-Nab-Awen Park Opportunity Site

- Lead: City of Grand Rapids
- Reviewing Master Plan with Indigenous Community and preparing Construction Documents

Event/Activation Highlights

Family Paddle Nights

- Friday July 29, August 26 in Riverside Park from 5:00 – 9:00 PM

Global Water Fest Grand Rapids

- Saturday July 30, Canal Park, 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Rock Hard 7's Tournament (GR Rugby)

- Saturday July 30, Canal Park, 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Stewardship Day(s) at Millennium Park

- Wednesday August 3 & 10 at Millennium Park from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Friday Night Live

- Friday August 5 & 19, Canal Park, 6:30 – 10:30 PM

Jet-Pack Flight Suit Demonstration (Advance Manufacturing Expo)

- Thursday August 11 around Gillett Bridge at 4:00PM

Lower Grand History Walking Tour

- Sunday August 28 starting at the Baw-wa-ting Historical Marker, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Middle Grand History Walking Tour

- Monday August 29 starting on the Blue Bridge, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Upper Grand River History Walking Tour

- Tuesday August 30 starting at 555 Monroe Avenue, 6:00 – 7:30 PM