

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
APRIL 27, 2022 – 6:00 PM

The special meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Barnett at 6:06pm.

Council Members Present: Barnett, Boleware, Bruce, Knol, Massey and Newlin

Council Members Absent: Bridges

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Valentine and Director Schnackel

CLOSED SESSION

Consideration of approval to enter into a closed session for a strategy session for the following Collective Bargaining Agreements: General Employees, Teamsters, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM), Command Officers Association of Michigan (COAM) and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) (*Note: Council will return to open session immediately following the closed session to resume the special meeting*)

MOTION by Massey, support by Bruce, to enter into a closed session for a strategy session for the following Collective Bargaining Agreements: General Employees, Teamsters, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM), Command Officers Association of Michigan (COAM) and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

Mayor Barnett stated that Council will return to open session immediately following the closed session to resume the special meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY AND NEWLIN

Nays: NONE

Absent: BRIDGES

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

City Council resumed to open session at 7:24pm.

DISCUSSION WITH SPORT FACILITIES CONSULTANTS

Ellen Schnackel, Director of Special Services, explained that last month City Council approved a contract for consultants to review city facilities and programs. She met with the consultants this morning and toured several facilities and they will continue their tour and meetings with stakeholders over the remainder of the week. She introduced Evan Eleff to make a presentation.

Evan Eleff, Consultant for The Sports Facilities Companies, stated that this is an important meeting for them to have up front in order to get feedback from City Council at the start of their project. He reviewed the proposed agenda for this evening that included:

- Review of the company and what they do
- Scope of work that will be done for the city
- Process and approach
- Open Discussion
 - Definition of Success – goals and outcomes City Council would like to see
 - Q & A

Suzy Fisher-Reeder and Kaliegh Hincman introduced themselves, also representing The Sports Facilities Companies.

Mr. Eleff discussed the company, scope of work and process/approach they would be taking to review the facilities and programs and stated that the time-line for the final plan to be presented to the city would be around early August, 2022.

Mayor Barnett suggested that The Player's Barn is added to the list of stakeholders to meet with so the city ensures that it is working with them and not competing with the organization.

DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

Mr. Eleff asked Council for their definition of success and how they want the Parks and Recreation program to be viewed.

City Council offered the following comments:

- Supportive of activities and residents desire as they are paying the taxes
- Flexible to change with changing demographics
- Operationally sustainable – revenue neutral
- Program is cooperating with other businesses and non-profit organizations so as to not put them out of business as they contribute tax dollars to the community – collaborative, synergy
- Inclusionary vision to serve all residents including disabled so programs and structures are offered for blind, persons with sensory or cognitive disabilities, etc.
- Strengthening of the arts programs to encourage creativity so it is known as the Art, Parks and Recreation Department
- Adult senior parks and sensory parks
- Cautious not to shift services and activities to outside competitors that residents cannot afford
- Outdoor core and balance parks and other outdoor health parks
- Ensure that facilities are the right size for the community
- Reflective of the community
- The program and city are viewed as a model for other communities
- Self-supportive and not a drain on the budget

Mr. Eleff discussed the importance of needing to fill the gaps without competing.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Eleff asked City Council to address the following questions:

- Greatest needs not yet addressed?
- Greatest challenges?
- Who else should the consultants be meeting with?

City Council offered the following comments:

Needs not yet address:

- Need to maintain and upgrade existing equipment not only purchase new
- More pavilions at Heritage Park
- Maintain Bathrooms at the parks
- Second dog park site
- Technology integrated to teach on-line classes as an alternative
- Domed tennis courts and other facilities to make them year-round activities
- Inclusion of non-motorized paths

Challenges:

- Funding
- Motivating people to utilize facilities and programs
- Addressing older demographic needs but also attracting young families

Other stakeholders to meet with:

- Surrounding communities to share explore the option of shared facilities
- Henry Ford Health System
- Religious organizations
- OLS
- Total Soccer

It was suggested that the consultants also consider touring facilities of surrounding community such as Plymouth and Troy.

Council inquired about the consultants assisting with potential grant opportunities. Mr. Eleff stated that while they may find some local grants, they are actively involved in federal grants and can provide information on those options.

It was suggested that the city look into the Silver Sneakers Program. Staff and the consultants said they would look into this program some more but that that this program seems more appropriate for a member-based organization as non-residents could potentially be paying less to use the program than residents if the city had this program.

Mr. Eleff commented on seasonal domes and cautioned that the city should be aware of the following if considering season domes: the wear and tear and they tend to only last

approximately 7-8 years, insurance has doubled on domes in the last year, there is significant time involved in putting them up/tearing them down and the city would need to consider storage availability.

City Council had no further items to add for open discussion. Mr. Eleff stated that the number and range of services provided by the city and programs able to be offered through the HAWK is special and remarkable. He added that the city is not only providing for these services but doing so successfully and it is something of which the City Council and staff should be very proud.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Massey, support by Newlin, to adjourn the special meeting at 8:28 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk