

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
COSTICK ACTIVITIES CENTER – SHANNON HALL
OCTOBER 14, 2024 – 6:00PM**

The study session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 6:02pm.

Council Members Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bridges, Bruce, Dwyer, and Rich

Council Members Absent: Knol

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, Assistant City Manager Mondora, City Clerk Lindahl, Director Schnackel, and City Attorney Joppich

Mayor Rich thanked the public attending the meeting and acknowledged participants from the Council on Aging. She clarified that City Council study sessions are for internal discussion and reports. Public input is always welcomed, but there will not be time tonight for extensive public comment. Residents can always speak at the regular City Council meetings and there is a “Walk the Hawk” event tomorrow, when the Mayor and others will be walking at the Hawk and talking with residents. Before any decisions are made regarding the Costick Center, public hearings with opportunity for public input will be held.

DISCUSSION ON IDEAS FOR POTENTIAL JOINT MEETING WITH FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE CITY OF FARMINGTON

Council discussed ideas for a potential joint meeting with Farmington Public Schools and the City of Farmington. Noting that academic achievement impacts the entire City and is a shared priority, Council focused on the following topics for potential discussion during a joint meeting:

- Strengthen communication between the School Board and City Council. Share minutes and other key communications between the City Council, School Board, and the City of Farmington to foster collaboration.
- Student Achievement: Encourage residents including seniors to volunteer and support student learning. Develop ways for the City to support and honor student achievement. Share research findings and programming updates from the School Board to foster ideas on how the City can support educational efforts.
- Job Readiness and Experiential Learning: Foster internships and real-world learning opportunities in city departments and local businesses. Offer the City’s resources and alliances to create job opportunities for young people.
- Strengthen school safety through better coordination between the Schools and the Police Department. Encourage real ALICE training (active shooter training) in schools through collaboration with the Police Department.
- Discuss Emergency Preparedness. Possibly develop a round-table collaborative exercise.

Mayor Rich noted that these suggestions align with the Council’s goal set in January to strengthen collaboration with the schools and the neighboring city. City Manager Mekjian was tasked with sharing the proposed topics with Farmington Public Schools and the City of Farmington for further discussion.

DISCUSSION ON APPLICATION FOR A MORE RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT 2024 GRANT PROGRAM

Clerk Lindahl explained that historically clerks only utilized state and federal funding for election administration. The More Responsive Government 2024 Grant Program marks a new direction for election funding in Michigan, allowing the use of publicly disclosed charitable donations and in-kind contributions for elections under new legislation aligned with the Michigan Constitution.

Farmington Hills applied and was awarded \$60,000 from this grant program. The application and agreement were reviewed and approved by the City's attorney and finance director.

Planned uses for the award included:

- New precinct signage to improve polling location identification.
- Security upgrades for the Clerk's office and Counting Board.
- Help desk station improvements at the city's 27 precincts.
- Replacement of outdated equipment used in election administration.

The grant proposal will be presented for a Resolution under the Consent Agenda at tonight's regular council meeting.

In response to questions, Clerk Lindahl affirmed that the funds were being used in a politically neutral way.

Council praised the grant award. Mayor Rich noted that obtaining this grant aligned with Council's 2024 goal of securing additional funding for the City through grant opportunities.

REVIEW OF SENIOR SERVICES AND TOUR OF THE COSTICK CENTER

Council Member Bridges expressed appreciation to the Council on Aging for proposing this study session at the Costick Center. He highlighted the Council on Aging's work in representing seniors by ensuring programming and services that meet their needs.

Presentation on Senior Services by Special Services Director Ellen Schnackel, Deputy Director Brian Farmer, and Senior Adult Services Supervisor Marsha Koet

Demographics: Population of people age 60+ is increasing in Farmington Hills. Number of adults 85+ will double. This increases the demand for senior services. 170 volunteers support this effort.

- Meals on Wheels: Currently serves over 200 meals daily.
- Meals at Costick Center: 107,000 lunch meals are prepared and served at the Costick Center per year.
- Transportation Service: Provides 14,000 rides annually for medical appointments, shopping, and other needs, with priority given to travel to and from dialysis and other essential medical trips.
- Outreach Services: The Outreach Counselor Teresa Jurgovich assists with Medicare and Medicaid counseling, works with the unhoused population, and receives police and fire intervention referrals. Last year there were 179 such referrals which required collaboration with agencies such as Adult Protective Services, Area Agency on Aging, etc.
- Holiday Package Program: Delivered 581 packages to seniors in collaboration with community organizations.
- Programs at the Costick Center:

- Fitness Classes: Over 40 options, including gym exercises, yoga, and pickleball. All have very strong participation.
- Cycling Group: Began with 60 participants, now includes 240 members who ride 16,000 miles annually.
- Social Groups: Include New Friends Social Club, which helps seniors reintegrate into social activities after caregiving or life transitions.
- Costick Pool classes.
- Respite care for older adults, many with dementia, providing a break for caregivers.
- Special Events and Services:
 - Veterans Resource Day, AARP tax services (provides ~450 free tax returns per year), law day, shredding events, and the Dine and Discover series, which combines lectures with meals.
 - Various support groups for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, grief, and aging.

Council Members thanked the volunteers and Council on Aging for their efforts.

Special Services Deputy Director Farmer led Council on a tour of the Costic Center.

ADJOURNMENT

Following the tour, the Study Session meeting was adjourned at 7:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk