

MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 – 7:30 PM

The regular session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 7:30PM.

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

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian; City Clerk Lindahl; Directors Aranowski, Kettler-Schmult, Rushlow and Schnackel, Police Chief King, and City Attorney Joppich

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Cassandra Williams, Emergency Preparedness Commission, led the pledge of allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA**

MOTION by Knol, support by Bruce, to approve the agenda as published.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS FROM CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

**Emergency Preparedness Commission Tip of the Month**

Cassandra Williams, Farmington Hills/Farmington Emergency Preparedness Commission, presented the tip of the month. September is National Preparedness Month, and the Commission was focusing on personal emergency preparedness, including essential items for a 72-hour self-sufficiency kit in the case of an area-wide emergency. The 72-hour kit will be useful for both evacuation and sheltering in place in the event of a large-scale emergency. Websites with more information about 72-hour kits include [www.Michigan.gov/miready](http://www.Michigan.gov/miready) and <https://www.oakgov.com/community/health/public-health-services/emergency-preparedness>

**PRESENTATION ON THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPERATING MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL**

Postponed until the City Council meeting of October 14, 2024.

**PRESENTATION ON THE FARMINGTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY 2024 MILLAGE**

President of the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees Ernie McClellan and Library Director Kelly Segrist presented information related to the November 2024 millage proposal. Board Member Kathie Brown was also present.

The ballot initiative requests a renewal of the current summer millage rate of 0.9264 mills for a 20-year term.

**Revenue and Funding Sources.**

Mr. McClellan discussed the importance of the millage, which funds 55% of the library's operations, including capital improvements, staffing, and maintenance. Other sources of income include:

- Intergovernmental revenues: Funding from other governmental entities.
- Memorials and gifts: Donations and gifts provided by community members.
- Fees and other income, such as occasional grants.

It is essential to maintain a stable revenue stream to continue providing high-quality services to the community.

### **Expenditures and Cost Management**

The primary expenditure of the library is salaries, as people are the library's greatest resource. McClellan noted that despite the library's growth, spending on salaries has been lower than 2019 levels. The library has carefully evaluated staffing levels to ensure that the right people are in the right roles, allowing for efficient service delivery. A focus on digital resources and programming has helped the library modernize and meet community needs while keeping costs manageable.

### **Capital Improvements and Future Plans**

Mr. McClellan pointed out that the library has been able to fund most of its capital improvements out of the general fund, demonstrating the library's commitment to responsible budgeting. Several significant improvements have been made at both the Farmington and Farmington Hills locations, including:

- New air conditioning units and chillers.
- New entry doors at the Farmington location.
- Wi-Fi technology upgrades.
- Carpet, paint, and general maintenance in both buildings.
- A new automated material handling system to improve operational efficiency.
- The installation of new 24/7 pickup lockers, allowing residents to access library materials at any time (launching soon).

Mr. McClellan shared plans for roof replacements at both library buildings in the coming year, which will also be funded through general fund revenue.

### **Library Services and Usage**

- The Farmington Community Library provides a wide variety of services to residents, including:
  - Access to print, digital materials, tools, and electronic devices.
  - Research databases and access to publications like The New York Times and The Washington Post.
  - Interlibrary loan services.
  - Fine-free policy: The library does not charge fines for late returns, fostering a more accessible environment for all patrons.
  - Free meeting rooms: Per a recent board decision, residents can use library meeting rooms at no cost.
- **Usage Statistics:**
  - The library is open for 68 hours each week, offering access to approximately 280,000 items.
  - Between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2024, the library has averaged:
    - 948,000 items checked out per year.
    - 41,401 active borrowers.

- 427,710 library visits annually.
  - 1,363 events with 42,904 attendees per year.
  - 78,714 public computer sessions each year.
- **Summary**

The upcoming 2024 Library Millage Proposal asks residents to approve a 20-year renewal of the summer operating millage at the current rate of 0.9264 mills.

    - This millage is crucial to the library’s operations, funding 55% of its total revenue.
    - The millage does not involve any tax increase—it simply renews the existing rate.
    - The funds raised will continue to support normal library operations, as well as capital improvements and building maintenance.

**Council Discussion**

Several council members expressed strong support for the millage renewal and praised the library's role in the community.

Council asked that year-over-year usage data to be included in future reports.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence received.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, to approve consent agenda as read.

Roll Call Vote:

- Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH
- Nays: NONE
- Absent: NONE
- Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

There were no items removed for discussion.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS’ COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Councilmember comments or announcements.

**CITY MANAGER UPDATE**

City Manager Mekjian provided the following update:

- **Upcoming Ballot Initiatives:**

In addition to the Farmington Public Schools millage and the Farmington Community Library millage renewals, there will be two city ballot initiatives on the November 2024 ballot for residents to consider:

  - 2014 Road Millage Renewal: This millage renewal will continue funding road repairs and maintenance across the city.

- Charter Amendment: The amendment will adjust the timeline for when newly elected city officials take office, aligning with changes made at the state level to election laws.
- **Election Day Preparations:**  
City Hall will be closed to the public for regular business on November 4th and 5th, 2024, due to expected high voter turnout. The building will remain open for election-related activities. City staff will be at work, and available by phone.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CONSIDERATION OF APPEAL OF A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST DATED AUGUST 21, 2024.**

Council discussed the Consideration of Appeal of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request submitted on August 21, 2024, regarding a traffic accident. The request had initially been denied by the Police Department.

#### **Overview of the Appeal:**

City Attorney Joppich explained that a FOIA request submitted by Jessica Coleman sought records related to a traffic accident in Novi involving her husband. Records were provided, but Coleman believed that an additional statement made by her husband at the scene was missing.

The Police Department had certified that no written record of such a statement existed. The accident took place in Novi, and the Novi Police Department was in charge of the scene, making it likely that any additional records Coleman sought would be held by Novi.

City Attorney Joppich noted that Ms. Coleman was not present at tonight's meeting to provide additional context for her appeal. In her August 21, 2024 email, Coleman indicated her belief that a verbal statement made by her husband should have been documented, but Joppich reiterated that the Farmington Hills Police Department had no record of such a statement and had advised Ms. Coleman to contact the Novi Police Department for further details.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Bridges, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby affirms the Police Department's August 6, 2024, response to Ms. Coleman's May 21, 2024, FOIA request for the following reasons:

1. The Police Department's responsive records in its August 6<sup>th</sup> response constitute all of its public records regarding the incident.
2. The Police Department further certifies pursuant to MCL 15.235(5)(b) that a written statement referenced in Ms. Coleman's appeal does not exist.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

### **CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FARMINGTON HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES TO AMEND CHAPTER 19, "PARKS AND RECREATION," ARTICLE III "RULES AND REGULATIONS," SECTION 19-51, "ANIMALS PROHIBITED," FOR PURPOSES OF ALLOWING DOGS IN PIONEER PARK AND THE CITY'S DOG PARK, AND ADDING AN EXCEPTION FOR SERVICE ANIMALS. CMR 9-24-90**

**Overview of Ordinance Changes:**

Ellen Schnackel, Director of Special Services Schnackel presented the proposed ordinance amendment to the Farmington Hills Code of Ordinances. The amendment relates to Chapter 19, "Parks and Recreation," specifically Section 19-51, which deals with rules about animals in parks. Key changes include:

- Service Animals: The ordinance now clearly defines service animals in accordance with Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring their legal allowance in all parks.
- William Grace Dog Park: The use of the William Grace Dog Park will be subject to compliance with existing rules and regulations, which are already established.
- Pioneer Park: The proposed ordinance will allow dogs on leashes in Pioneer Park, with some restrictions in place to ensure safety and harmony within the park.

**Council discussion:**

Signage at the parks will be posted as soon as the ordinance becomes effective.

Councilman Aldred, as Liaison to the Parks and Recreation department, supported the proposal, mentioning that it had been thoroughly discussed and was a good fit for the city's dog-loving community.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the INTRODUCTION of an Ordinance to amend the Farmington Hills Code of Ordinances to amend Chapter 19, "Parks and Recreation," Article III "Rules and Regulations," Section 19-51, "Animals Prohibited," for purposes of allowing dogs in Pioneer Park and the City's Dog Park, and adding an exception for service animals.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE USE OF CITY FACILITIES POLICY TO ALLOW DOGS IN PIONEER PARK AND OTHER UPDATES REGARDING ANIMALS IN CITY FACILITIES. CMR 9-24-91**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the amendments to Section IV.M. of the Use of City Facilities Policy to allow dogs in Pioneer Park and other updates regarding animals in City facilities, subject to and only effective upon the approval and effective date of the concurrently proposed amendments to Section 19-51 of the City Code addressing the same subject matter.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE OAKLAND COUNTY NINE MILE PATHWAY TASK FORCE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. CMR 9-24-92**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to execute the Oakland County Nine Mile Pathway Task Force Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE TRUNKLINE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT WITH THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT). CMR 9-24-93**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to designate the Department of Public Works Superintendent as well as the Department of Public Services Director as the authorized City representatives with regard to the Michigan Department of Transportation's State Trunkline Maintenance Contract #2024-0311.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF EXTENSION OF AGREEMENT FOR RESURFACING OF THE FARMINGTON HILLS GOLF CLUB CART PATH REPAIRS WITH BSI PAVING IN THE ESTIMATED AMOUNT, NOT TO EXCEED, \$200,000. CMR 9-24-94**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for the extension of the agreement with BSI Paving for the resurfacing of the Farmington Hills Golf Course Cart Path in the estimated amount, not to exceed, \$200,000.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AS NEEDED CONTRACTOR FOR MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND EMERGENCY POOL SERVICES TO BARUZZINI AQUATICS, A DIVISION OF BARUZZINI CONTRACTING LLC, IN THE ESTIMATED ANNUAL AMOUNT OF \$20,000. CMR 9-24-95**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for as needed contractor for maintenance, repair and emergency pool services to Baruzzini Aquatics, a division of Baruzzini Contracting LLC, in the estimated annual amount of \$20,000.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF BID FOR TACTICAL VESTS AND PLATES FOR PUBLIC SAFETY TO PRINCIP DEFENSE LLC. IN THE ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF \$71,000.00 WITH APPROVED EXTENSIONS. CMR 9-24-96**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for Tactical Vests and Plates for Public Safety to the lowest, most qualified bidder, Princip Defense LLC. in the estimated amount of \$71,000 (\$31,000 for the Police Department and \$40,000 for the Fire Department) with one or more administration approved extension not-to-exceed a total of five (5) additional years.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF EXTENSION OF AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF BALLISTIC HELMETS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO ALLIE BROTHERS IN THE ESTIMATED BUDGETED AMOUNT \$20,000. CMR 9-24-97**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for the extension of the agreement with Allie Brothers for the purchase of ballistic helmets for the Fire Department in the estimated budgeted amount of \$20,000.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF EXTENSION OF PURCHASE FOR E-PLANREVIEW SOFTWARE FOR BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PLAN REVIEW TO E-PLANSOFT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,250. CMR 9-24-98**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for the purchase of software, e-PlanREVIEW for building construction plan review from e-PlanSoft in the amount of \$25,250.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2024.**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the city council special study session meeting minutes of September 9, 2024.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2024.**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approve the city council regular meeting minutes of September 9, 2024.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.



**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor Rich reviewed the process and rules relative to public comment.

Pam Gerald offered comments about a council member's interaction with the Police Chief at tonight's study session.

Frank and Sandy Frederick shared their frustrations relative to ongoing issues with Fiber City's installation of a cabinet on their lawn and related how their lawn had been repeatedly damaged during the installation process. Calls to City Hall had gone answered. They asserted that the installation by Fiber City has had a negative impact on their home, including their property value.

Mayor Rich asked City Manager Mekjian to meet with the Fredericks in the hallway just outside Council Chambers.

Angie Smith thanked the Council for their ongoing support in building a stronger relationship between the city and the school board. Smith emphasized the importance of collaboration between the schools and the city to ensure the success of the community.

Erit Gill shared frustrations with poor cell phone coverage in her neighborhood, most noticeable in the 9 Mile/Middlebelt area. The lack of cell coverage has cost her job opportunities and caused significant disruptions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The regular session of City Council meeting adjourned at 8:22PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk