

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL BUDGET SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MAY 8, 2018 – 6:00PM

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Massey at 6:00pm.

Council Members Present: Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey, Rich and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian and Director Barr

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Joppich provided an overview of his law firm reviewed several items within his proposed budget with Council and staff. In response to Council, he explained that the special projects line item was added to the budget to include larger-scope projects that would not be day-to-day items covered by the retainer. He noted that the items included in this portion of the budget are previously discussed with staff to make sure there is an agreement on whether they would be considered a special project.

Councilmember Bridges inquired about long-term or strategic planning by the Attorney's Office such as a full code or charter review. Attorney Joppich responded that he would not conduct such a study without direction from City Council or administrative staff or if legal cases come into play that warrant a review of a current ordinance or practice.

Mayor and Council thanked Attorney Joppich for his dedication in representing the City.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Director Ellen Schnackel commented that City Council was recently presented with the Department's annual report. She reported that 82% of their program registrants are residents and over 50% of the registration is now completed on-line. They continue to work cooperatively with sponsorships and volunteers and are excited about the purchase of the Harrison High School and dog park properties and potential programming for those sites.

The budget figures were reviewed by Council and staff.

Director Schnackel discussed the increase in part-time salaries that was due to the tiered system the department implemented several years ago in order to attract and retain part-time personnel. The department also worked with Human Resources on appropriate pay wages for part-time staff and found that the city was low at the time and that was the main reason they were struggling to find and keep part-time personnel.

Parks Millage Fund

Discussion was held on security at the park and the potential installation of cameras. The budget figures were reviewed by Council and staff.

Nutrition Grant Fund and Golf Course Capital Improvement Fund and Related Capital

The budget figures were reviewed by Council and staff.

Public Information

It was noted that with the dissolution of SWOCC and sale of that building, the video division has moved into the Sisters of Mercy building for now and will ultimately be moved to the new Recreation Center (Harrison High School property). Assistant Director, Bryan Farmer, mentioned that a new Video Division Manager was recently hired due to a retirement and staff feels she will bring new ideas to the video division and is working on shorter video clips that can easily be included on social media.

Mayor Massey noted that the cable channel should be changed within the budget to the new channel 203.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Director Karen Mondora stated that there is no request for increased staffing. She stated that the road projects proposed for 2019 have been previously discussed with Council as well as the Halsted Road Project that has been included in the Capital Improvement budget for consideration. She pointed out that another focus of the department is fleet maintenance.

The budget figures were reviewed by Council and staff.

Director Mondora noted that the increase in her budget overall is due to increased Waste Management fees and additional overtime expenses to cover vacant positions, which also is the cause for the fluctuation in overtime expenditures and staffing figures.

Councilmember Rich inquired about the metric used to track service requests. Director Mondora stated that the 10 days can fluctuate based on the request and if there is a need to order parts, etc.

Major and Local Road Funds

Discussion was held on the making and use of brine and the significant savings to the city, the increased waste management fees and collection of fees and increased road maintenance costs due to snow events being longer this year and several events being over 4 inches that require the city to go into neighborhoods per city policy.

City Manager Boyer indicated that further discussion on the road millage and special assessment districts would be held at the City Council study session scheduled for June 11, 2018.

Related Capital

Director Mondora stated that they have included in the capital budget an automated vehicle locating system that was installed on the trucks. Supervisor McCarthy explained that the system can track the amount of salt used, routes for the snow plows, stops, speeds, etc. The map is on-line so residents can see areas that have been plowed as pending, underway or finished.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

City Manager Boyer commented that the budget figures are very similar for each board/commission from one budget to the next.

Councilmember Lerner inquired about the Court Revenue and Expenses for Farmington. Director Barr stated that he will double-check the figures provided by Farmington.

Mayor Massey suggested increasing the Farmington Youth Assistance budget from \$1,500 to \$4,500. Council concurred.

Staff was asked to double check the year to date figures for Boards/Commissions.

CITY COUNCIL

City Manager Boyer confirmed that the budget decreased for memberships due to Council no longer participating in the National League of Cities.

Mayor Massey suggested some minor revisions to the bullet points under performance objectives, specifically to remove language relating to Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) since an Authority does not currently exist.

CITY ADMINISTRATION

Councilmember Rich suggested adding a goal for enhancing communication through the city website and social media.

Mayor Massey suggested removing language referencing RTA under the performance objectives for this section also. Dr. Rich suggested adding SEMCOG.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

City Manager Boyer stated that the city intends to use Brownfield Authority funding for the renovations to the Harrison High School facility for asbestos abatement and any additional hazmat work that may be required for the site.

City Council took a 5 minute break.

FINANCE

Director Steve Barr expressed his appreciation to the Department Heads and his staff, particularly Shu-Fen Lin, for all of their hard work in preparing the budget. He noted that staffing has remained consistent. The City's bond ratings are AAA with Standard/Poors, which is the highest rating that can be received and AA1 with Moody. For the 19th year the city was awarded the CAFR award. He mentioned that the Pension Board voted to hire a new investment consultant. Healthcare is 107% funded and Retirement is 85% funded. He discussed taxable values but added that another recession is expected as they tend to be cyclical.

Discussion was held on the hiring of a consultant for the Defined Contribution plan, bank service fees and a new banking RFP and how that will enhance operations.

Post Employment Benefits

Director Barr stated that this includes only those employees under the Defined Benefit plan.

Inter-fund Transfers

Director Barr noted that debit service is down due to pay offs adding that the court will be paid off in 3 years.

RECREATION CENTER RENOVATION FUND

Director Barr explained that the city created a separate fund for the purchase, expansion of the Harrison High School property to show all bond proceeds and expenditures for this project. He stated that the city will initially put \$700,000 into the fund and will be reimbursed from bond proceeds.

City Manager Boyer stated that staff created this separate fund so that it would be transparent to all with regard to the purchase and construction costs for the project.

It was suggested that the name is changed to Community Center Fund or something other than "Recreation". Staff would review.

Debt Funds

Director Barr reported that the city has very little debt, approximately 10%.

WRAP-UP

City Manager Boyer thanked all Department Heads for their hard work on their budgets, noting that the budget process starts in January. He stated that every year the city comes under their projected expenses and will continue to do so. He especially thanked Steve Barr, Shu-Fen Lin and Kim Reid from the Finance Department.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Massey adjourned the study session meeting at 8:27pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk