

**MINUTES
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MARCH 18, 2024 – 2:00PM**

The special study session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 2:03pm

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

Council Members Absent: None

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

MODIFICATION TO RULES OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND GUIDELINES OF CONDUCT

Mayor Rich led a discussion of proposed modifications to Rules of the City Council and Guidelines of Conduct. The purpose of the discussion was to determine which proposed changes have consensus approval, in order for the amendments to then appear on the March 25, 2024 Council agenda. The last Rules changes occurred in June 2023.

The changes are policy changes, as opposed to changes in the ordinance, and only need a single hearing at a regular Council meeting where in order to be approved, the changes need a two-thirds vote of all City Council members.

Discussion focused on the need to efficiently conduct the City's business, which included moving on actionable items, hearing presentations and reports, and hearing from City residents on matters of concern. The proposed changes increased the efficiency of the meetings and clarified the alignment of Guidelines of Conduct during public participation with Roberts Rules of Order.

Discussion was held on public participation, noting that residents who indicate on the blue participation cards that they have an interest in a specific agenda item should be given the opportunity to speak on that item when it is heard during the meeting. If residents have a specific concern separate from agenda items, they can address those concerns during the Public Comment section of the agenda.

Council prioritized being responsive to residents, and discussion was held as how to best facilitate that responsiveness during Council meetings; blue cards could be updated to more clearly ask about the concern that brought the resident to the meeting and could then be given to the City Manager, who could follow up with the resident during the meeting (by publicly addressing the concern) or after the meeting (contacting the resident directly).

Council discussed scheduling closed sessions, as allowed under the Open Meetings Act, prior to regular meetings, and there appeared to be support for this change as current practice had closed sessions starting at 10pm or later, when no one was at their best. Council had the flexibility to schedule closed sessions at 6pm or earlier, with study session meetings starting after that. Regular meeting time would remain the same, at 7:30pm.

Council discussed proposed changes under E. Citizen Participation. Council felt it important to emphasize and include certain Roberts Rules of Order items that were followed and sometimes specifically

referenced during meetings, and to make it clear that all are welcome to speak at Council meetings; no one should feel intimidated by others as intimidation of any kind limits free speech.

Council also discussed whether to allow, ban, or regulate hand-held signs during meetings. As there was no consensus, no change to the Rules and Guidelines of Conduct regarding signs was suggested at this time.

It was brought out in discussion that past Farmington Hills practice had been to limit public comment to 3 minutes (rather than 5 minutes) except when someone was speaking on behalf of a group, when the limit was 5 minutes, and the 3 minute limit was common among other municipalities in the state.

After discussion, the changes to the Rules of City Council and Guidelines of Conduct appeared to have consensus from Council and would appear on the next agenda, with all changes to be effective the first meeting in April, except changes to Subsections E.2, E.5, and E.7 which will not take effect until the first meeting in June 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The study session meeting adjourned at 3:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk