

MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL  
STUDY SESSION  
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
MARCH 9, 2026, 2026 – 5:30PM

The study session of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 5:38pm.

Councilmembers Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bridges, Dwyer, Knol, Rich and Starkman

Councilmembers Absent: None

Others Present: Acting City Manager Mondora, City Clerk Lindahl, Directors Brown, Farmer and Skrobola Police Chief Piggott, Fire Chief Unruh and City Attorney Joppich

*The closed session started at 5:39pm*

**CLOSED SESSION ITEM:**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL TO ENTER INTO A CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS STRATEGY AND NEGOTIATION SESSIONS CONNECTED WITH THE NEGOTIATION OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, AS ALLOWED UNDER SECTION 8(1)(C) OF THE MICHIGAN OPEN MEETINGS ACT.**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bridges, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby enters into a closed session to discuss strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement, as allowed under Section 8(1)(c) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

*The open session resumed at 6:41pm*

**STUDY SESSION ITEMS:**

**UPDATE ON THE OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS/CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS AGREEMENT**

Acting City Manager Mondora provided an update on the Oakland County Parks partnership for Heritage Park, noting that Oakland County had submitted their Parks Action Plan, operations and maintenance plan, and capital improvement plan on February 6th. The city provided feedback following the February 9th study session, and Oakland County prepared an updated presentation.

Chris Ward, Oakland County Parks Director, presented the partnership proposal, emphasizing that Heritage Park would become their most visited park with an estimated 250,000-750,000 annual visits, of which 60% are non-Farmington Hills residents. He acknowledged this was the most complex partnership Oakland County Parks has undertaken due to the park's high usage, extensive programming, and staffing considerations. Ward stressed the importance of shared stewardship, with the city retaining ownership and primary decision-making authority while Oakland County manages day-to-day operations.

Ashley Smith, formerly the city's Nature Center supervisor and now with Oakland County Parks, outlined the park's evolution under her 15-year tenure, highlighting successful programs like Nature Preschool and nature camps. She presented a conceptual vision dividing the park into three zones: discovery gateways for immersive experiences, nature stewardship areas, and community gathering spaces.

A facility condition assessment conducted by JFR Architects revealed significant deferred maintenance needs across multiple structures including the Spicer House, Nature Center, and splash pad. Oakland County increased their financial commitment from \$2.5 million to \$5 million in the first five years, with another \$5 million forecast for the following five years, emphasizing this represents a floor rather than ceiling for investment.

The presentation emphasized benefits including addressing maintenance backlogs, expanding programming capacity, improving accessibility, and bringing Oakland County's natural resources management expertise to the 211-acre natural area.

Acting City Manager Mondora expressed support for the investment opportunity, noting the Spicer House alone would require millions in investment that the city would struggle to provide over 20-30 years. She highlighted the city's receipt of a \$500,000 state grant for parking and playground improvements that would benefit from additional county funding.

Councilmember Michael Bridges asked about the complexity Ward had mentioned several times. Ward explained the complexity stemmed from the park's high visitation numbers, extensive programming throughout the year, staffing transitions, special events, and the level of public care for the facility.

Mayor Rich expressed concerns about feeling rushed in the process, given this is the city's first such partnership and Heritage Park's status as a community jewel. Ward assured council that deadlines could be extended to ensure all parties feel comfortable with the agreement.

Council Member Knol praised the investment opportunity, noting the millions needed for structures like the Spicer House that the city cannot realistically fund long-term.

Council requested a summary document outlining the three required plan components that council needed to review. City Attorney Steve Joppich clarified that extending the March 30th deadline by 60-90 days would allow time for proper review. Staff indicated they were close but needed time for thorough review and red-line changes to the agreement.

Council agreed to extend the March 30<sup>th</sup> deadline by 60 days, with questions compiled within two weeks and another study session scheduled for April 13th to ensure robust processing of all concerns.

### **DISCUSSION ON FLOCK**

Police Chief Piggott addressed questions raised at the previous council meeting regarding FLOCK camera systems and transparency concerns. He acknowledged that while the department had internal policies governing computer access and criminal justice information, a specific FLOCK policy had been drafted but not implemented.

Chief Piggot emphasized that while an active FLOCK-specific policy was missing, the department maintained comprehensive policies governing officer access to criminal justice information through law enforcement code of ethics, CJIS compliance policies, and city internal computer policies. Officers face disciplinary action and potential criminal charges for personal misuse of any law enforcement computer systems.

He emphasized that FLOCK cameras only capture license plate images and vehicle photos, providing no personal information unless there is an active NCIC warrant entry.

Regarding misuse detection, Chief Piggott compared FLOCK to other law enforcement information systems like LEIN, CLEMIS, and NCIC, explaining that monitoring relies primarily on reports of improper use due to the volume of available information. The department investigates any notifications from systems like LEIN or Secretary of State regarding potential misuse and takes appropriate action.

The new policy includes internal audit processes where each division with FLOCK access will be audited to ensure policy compliance. Chief Piggott highlighted FLOCK's effectiveness in identifying felons and violent individuals traveling through the city.

Acting City Manager Mondora requested that the policy be shared with council for transparency purposes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Rich closed discussion and adjourned the meeting at 7:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk