

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, September 18, 2006, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor McShane.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buck, Knol, McShane, Sutherland, Wiggins.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue, Assistant City Manager Richards (arrived 8:46 p.m.).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

09-06-177 MOTION by Wiggins, seconded by Sutherland, to approve the agenda as submitted. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

STUDY SESSION ITEMS

Review of City Manager Work Plan/2006-07 City Council Goals.

City Manager Pastue reviewed the City Manager's Work Plan beginning with the water irrigation issue. He stated he would like to achieve reduced irrigation costs to homeowners by assessing actual cost of water and sewer service; developing a survey to obtain data from other communities; reviewing DWSD water and sewer invoices in order to estimate how much water is used for irrigation purposes and ground water infiltration; and researching requirements with Oakland County Health Department regarding the use of shallow private wells. He stated a preliminary review should be available by December 1st.

Councilmember Buck asked if all items on the work plan fit within Council's goals. Mayor McShane replied that Council should review all of the items and determine where they fit within Council's goals.

Pastue stated Museum Operations and Fund Raising relates to Goal No. 7 - Maximize Utilization of City Facilities/Action Centers and Increase New Events. He noted past discussion regarding the establishment of a private non-profit group. He further noted that the Historic Commission expressed interest in becoming more involved with the operation of the Museum. Pastue stated he would like to place Museum Operations and Fund Raising on the October 2nd agenda. Buck inquired if the work plan item or Goal No. 7 would be on the agenda. Pastue replied he was using the work plan as a guide to

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addressing the goals. Mayor McShane recommended Council recap the items on the work plan and make their decision accordingly.

Pastue commented on possible changes regarding the Civic Theatre including a change in management and soliciting bids for sale of the theater. He noted this action would relate to Council's Goal No. 7. He stated he would like to place discussion of the Civic Theatre on the October 2nd Agenda.

Pastue reviewed Goal No. 5 regarding Enhanced Code Enforcement. He recommended Council tour the City to determine issues involving commercial and single family residential properties, additional efforts needed for code enforcement, evaluate the housing rental ordinance for multi-family residential and determine allocation of resources for Code Enforcement. Pastue advised a decision needed to be made regarding the City's approach to code enforcement, i.e. a hard line approach versus working with businesses in a cooperative manner. He further recommended a review of the Zoning Code and Property Maintenance section of the City Code. He stated an evaluation of code enforcement problems and policies was needed to determine the commitment of resources.

Councilmember Sutherland inquired about a code enforcement problem in Chatham Hills. Pastue responded the blocks related to the landscape materials have been removed, however, dirt and bags of bark remain.

Pastue reviewed zoning issues related to Goal No. 4 and stated he would like to schedule a training session regarding economics of redevelopment. He recommended the Planning Commission evaluate multi-use and commercially zoned districts. Council concurred to meet at 5:30 p.m. on October 2, 2006 for a tour of the City.

Buck stated the Farmington Hills Redevelopment Committee is looking at corridor improvement on Grand River using overlay districts. He recommended placing this issue on the agenda.

Pastue stated he associated capital improvement projects with Goal No. 1 maintaining infrastructure. He noted there were a few projects that need to be dealt with regarding the MDOT streetscape improvements, Shiawassee Park improvements, Grove Street improvements, Pavilion completion, and Shiawassee Road reconstruction.

Councilmember Knol questioned if the City was going to install a sidewalk on the south side of Shiawassee between Farmington Road and Farmington High School during the Shiawassee Road reconstruction. Pastue affirmed there is enough roadway to install a sidewalk. He stated a design for Shiawassee reconstruction would have to be reviewed including the option of placing utilities underground. Buck asked if costs could be assessed to the homeowners. Pastue replied the City would be responsible for an underground conduit and the cost for utilities to move equipment off the premises.

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Responding to a question from Councilmember Wiggins, Pastue stated the City would not be responsible for maintenance of underground utilities. He recommended delaying further discussion of the Shiawassee Road reconstruction to another time.

Pastue reviewed the status of the sale of the courthouse and noted this item is not a specific goal of Council. He stated the Planning Commission meetings of October and November would include final site plan approval and consideration to recommend approval of Planned Unit Development Agreement to City Council. Pastue noted a determination still needed to be made on whether a storm sewer easement with Farmington Public Schools is necessary. He advised the Planned Unit Development Agreement would be placed on a November Council meeting agenda.

Pastue stated reorganization items which fall under Goal No. 1 include a letter of understanding with Public Works bargaining unit, pay plan analysis and revisions to administrative and employee manual.

Pastue reviewed Downtown Development Authority issues, noting some were related to planning. He stated some of the issues included a dumpster enclosure plan for Downtown Center, renewal of Principal Shopping District Assessment, bids for municipal parking lot snow removal, DDA Boundary issue and long-term parking analysis. He stated there was no actual goal for these issues, but could be tied to Goal No. 1 as they relate to efficiency.

Discussion followed regarding the City's website including using students to assist in keeping it up-to-date.

Councilmember Knol recommended City Administration issue an RFP to determine actual cost of redesign and update of the website.

Council concluded the review of the work plan, placing Amend City Code Dealing with Parking Tickets under Goal No. 6, Marketing/Branding under Goal No. 3 and Corridor Redevelopment Authority under Goal Nos. 2 or 4.

Mayor McShane recommended Council assign work plan items to specific Council goals. Council designated the following priorities to work plan items assigned to each Council goal:

2006-07 CITY COUNCIL GOALS

GOAL NO. 1: Maintain Strong Financial Management of the City of Farmington

Priority No. 1: Capital improvement Projects and Implementation of Reorganizations Plans.

Priority No. 3: Water Irrigation Issue.

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GOAL NO. 2: Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Business Retention and Recruitment Campaign

Priority No. 2: Corridor Redevelopment Authority

Council discussed partnering with Farmington Hills in developing the Grand River corridor and the creation of two committees: Corridor Redevelopment and Business Retention and Recruitment.

The special meeting was recessed at 8:00 p.m. and resumed at 8:46 p.m.

Mayor McShane stated Council would address agenda Item B - Film Festival and Item C – SWOCC Programming before returning to Item A – City Manager Work Plan.

FILM FESTIVAL

Present: Film Festival committee member, Brian Belesky

Pastue advised the City's third Film Festival would take place on Saturday, November 4, 2006. He asked Assistant City Manager Richards to discuss plans for the festival.

Richards reviewed the Film Festival activities and noted changes to this year's event. He stated it would be a one-day event on Saturday, November 4th, featuring a car theme. He noted a Power Wheels car purchased by Bob Saks would be raffled off. He stated six movies would be shown along with Road Runner cartoons. He recognized the efforts of Brian Belesky, Film Festival Committee member, in organizing the festival.

Belesky stated the Vintage Volkswagen Club would attend the Film Festival and there are tentative agreements from owners of several "Star Cars.". Belesky stated he is working on securing give-away items for the festival.

Knol asked if the car show was going to be in the lot south of the pavilion. Belesky responded the cars would be located on Grove Street and would be displayed from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Buck commended Mr. Belesky for his efforts.

Pastue noted Grove Street was a back up plan, but stated they would prefer to use the pavilion area.

SWOCC PROGRAMMING

Mayor McShane noted small businesses that are not part of a chain that could be interviewed on SWOCC. She asked that each Council member create a list of businesses to be interviewed. She requested Council's participation in the Mayor's Corner. Discussion followed regarding topics for discussion on cable.

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Scott Freeman, Farmington Resident and DDA Board Member, encouraged people to volunteer for programs and recommended that programs have a designated shelf life.

Knol noted that she sees more programming of Farmington events on the Farmington Hills cable channel than Farmington's. Knol asked if tapes of the Founder's Festival and other events could be aired in the evening instead of the usual display of static announcements. Discussion followed regarding "beefing up" programs after 5:00 p.m. Mr. Belesky noted that it is not labor intensive to run programmed videos of Farmington events on a 24-hour basis and that programming needed to be rotated. Discussion followed regarding improving cable programming.

2006-07 CITY COUNCIL GOALS (CONT.)

GOAL NO. 3: Develop and Implement a Community Marketing Campaign.

Priority No. 1: Marketing/Branding

Mayor McShane noted that Councilmember Buck was involved in developing branding for Farmington. She asked about its progress, a marketing initiative and whether it involves a joint effort of City Council and the DDA. Buck stated the project is not moving along as quickly as he would like. He discussed identity development and the use of focus groups to understand perceptions of Farmington style and character. He stated they are looking to organize 5 to 10 focus groups over the next 30 days. He stated the information gained from the groups would be analyzed to create theme options. He stated a marketing resource would be used to move the project forward to the end goal of a marketing plan. Mayor McShane advised this project is a no.1 priority. She noted that Buck has the opportunity to seek funding from the City. Pastue noted that his executive assistant, Cheryl Poole, could provide assistance where needed.

GOAL NO. 4: Maximize Recent Ordinances/Revisions as a Planning Platform.

Priority No. 1: Review Sign Ordinance Regarding Signs Outside the Downtown to be Completed by November 30, 2006.

Priority No. 2: Zoning Issues

Mayor McShane indicated Goal No. 4 relates to the City Manager's work plan relative to zoning issues and training for the Planning Commission. Pastue discussed the goals of the initial training session that would be followed by a workshop on economic redevelopment. Mayor McShane stated that zoning issues are an ongoing No. 2 priority.

Pastue suggested that in order to expedite the process of reviewing the sign ordinance as it relates to signage outside of the Downtown, a committee should be formed that would include himself, Ron Nesbitt from LSL Planning, Planning Commissioners

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Gronbach and Gyselinck, Attorney Schultz, Director Gushman and two representatives from Council. Mayor McShane stated this should be a “snappy” no. 1 priority.

GOAL NO. 5: Enhance Ordinance Enforcement.

Priority Nos.: 1 & 2

Mayor McShane noted that Goal No. 4 of the work plan fit in with City Council’s Goal No. 5. Discussion followed regarding the priority of residential property maintenance. Sutherland and Wiggins both felt Goal No. 5 was a No. 2 priority. Knol stated part of goal no. 5 was a No. 1 priority and part was a No. 2 priority depending on whether it is commercial, residential, or multi-family because of the resources that have already been committed. Buck stated that answering questions presented by Pastue is a No. 1 priority and following through on some of the actions would be a No. 2 priority.

GOAL NO. 6: Develop and Implement Corrective Action Plans Regarding Parking Issues/ Perceptions.

Priority No. 1: Joint effort with the Downtown Development Authority

Pastue stated this was an ambitious project and the consensus is for long-term direction that would include using a consultant.

Mayor McShane stated she has been questioned about when a committee would be formed to review the parking situation including short term solutions. She noted there are options, but somebody needs to take the lead.

Buck expressed concern that the DDA has not done enough to drive this issue. He questioned why the DDA has not purchased properties and taken the necessary steps to aggressively achieve the goals of the Master Plan. He asked if Council should take a greater leadership role in this issue. Pastue replied it is a joint effort of Council and the DDA. He stated the DDA needs to participate in the development and financing of the plan. Buck inquired if Council could have a joint closed session meeting with the DDA regarding property acquisition.

Knol felt Goal No. 6 was a No. 1 priority, but Council’s role is to work with the DDA and that Council and the City Manager should not take this issue on alone. Mayor McShane stated taking action on this goal would be good publicity for the City and that Council could partner with the DDA to at least set short term goals.

The consensus of Council was to make Goal No. 6 a No. 1 priority as a joint effort with the DDA.

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GOAL NO. 7: Develop and Implement Strategic Action Plans to Maximize Utilization Of City Facilities/Action Centers and to Increase Community-Oriented Events, Activities and Programs.

Priority No. 1: Civic Theatre

Priority No. 2: Warner Mansion

Sutherland felt the Warner Mansion and the Civic Theatre were not No. 1 priorities. Wiggins recommended increasing the involvement of the Historical Commission and moving forward with a non-profit group. Mayor McShane advised she would meet with the Commission to discuss their participation in the Mansion.

Knol noted there are a lot of No.1 priorities and recommended spreading the responsibility for them among department heads, staff and volunteers to lessen the load of the City Manager. She stated the Civic Theatre is an important issue since it is related to the whole reorganization of City administration. She stated the people connected with the Warner Museum are motivated and that new ways to bring in revenue is a constant issue. Mayor McShane advised that Council needs to look at shared services.

Mayor McShane stated more planning sessions are needed for the sake of the City and that problems at the Civic Theatre need to be addressed now. Discussion followed regarding meeting times and days.

The consensus of Council was to make the Civic Theatre a No. 1 priority and the Warner Mansion a No. 2 priority.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Scott Freeman, Farmington resident and DDA Boardmember, stated his willingness to be involved in discussions regarding changes to Channel 15. He noted that the DDA has a meeting scheduled with Mainstreet Oakland County regarding recruitment and retention of volunteers. He stated he would be happy to share the results of that meeting with Council. He suggested using advertising at the Civic Theatre as a communications tool for recruitment.

Annabelle Gabel, Farmington resident, spoke about the Victorian Festival in Northville that included a duck race and she noted the article in the Observer regarding Three Oaks Furniture moving out of the City.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Buck expressed concern regarding the MDOT signs on Grand River causing the perception that the downtown businesses are closed. He stated he would like to make this issue a top priority and have these signs relocated closer to the

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construction site. He further stated the signs are contributing to the deterioration of the downtown businesses.

Pastue responded that MDOT follows policy regarding placement of signs and noted that the City has added signs to indicate the businesses are open. Discussion followed regarding ways to address the problem and the indifference on the part of MDOT to the concerns of the businesses.

Mayor McShane expressed concern regarding House Bill 6456 that would remove local control of cable and would negate current contracts. She cited other concerns related to the bill. She recommended Councilmembers contact legislators opposing the bill.

ADJOURNMENT

09-06-185 MOTION by Knol, seconded by Wiggins to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

JoAnne M. McShane, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: OCTOBER 16, 2006