

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, August 2, 2004, 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 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Campbell.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Bush, Campbell, Knol, McShane, Mitchell.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, City Manager Pastue.

Mayor Campbell invited City Manager Pastue to address the goals and objectives remaining from the July 13, 2004 special meeting.

3. GOAL: Maintain the economic vitality of all commercial areas in the City and preserve the City's historical character and charm.

Objective 3-A: Support completion of the Historical Commission's project to create a database of all historic buildings in the City and investigate the adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance to further protect the historical character and charm of the community.

Pastue recommended the formation of a study committee to address this objective. Councilmember McShane recommended Jane Gundlach and Laura Meyers to serve on the committee. Councilmember Knol recommended Brian Golden and suggested that there are other members of the Historical Society that might be interested. Mayor Campbell suggested asking members of the Historical Commission if they would like to serve. McShane recommended publicizing the need for volunteers in the newspaper and on cable.

Pastue indicated that he would contact potential volunteers and initiate the process to formalize the committee.

Objective 3-B: Develop a work plan for business development, recruitment and retention, incorporating to the extent appropriate a role for elected officials and collaboration with Farmington Hills and other partners.

Knol suggested either the formation of a joint committee with the City of Farmington Hills or work with their Economic Development Corporation to address the Orchard Lake/Grand River corridor. McShane cited the disrepair of the K-Mart Center and the need for intervention in that property and others.

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Pastue noted that the long term leases of the K-Mart Center restrict making improvements. Mitchell and Bush suggested talking with listing agents to find out more about the leases.

McShane noted previous discussions regarding the use of committees to work on business development issues. Knol suggested working with the Farmington Hills Economic Development Group to establish a regional approach to addressing these issues. Discussion continued as to how to proceed with a joint endeavor. Pastue agreed to discuss the idea with Farmington Hills.

Mitchell expressed concern that too much of the City Manager's attention might be diverted from the downtown development. He agreed with the idea of working with Farmington Hills and through other members of the community. He suggested the expansion of the DDA from Farmington Road to Orchard Lake. Pastue noted proposed legislation that would allow that possibility. He indicated that he had discussed the issue with the DDA Board and they were amenable to the idea.

Mayor Campbell recommended that expansion should be considered only after the downtown is completed. McShane expressed the need to pursue expansion; citing development in other communities that have included the addition of major chain stores. She stated that the City has to look at ways to develop shopping centers to keep them viable. Knol also expressed the need to develop other areas in the City, but without adding more work to City staff.

Pastue noted that Farmington Hills is also interested in pursuing overlay districts for areas on Grand River east of Orchard Lake.

Mitchell noted that the goals and objectives are not necessarily drafted for completion in one year, but can be extended from year to year.

Pastue concurred to pursue the overlay district and economic development with Farmington Hills.

- Objective 3-C:** Support Downtown Development Authority(DDA) programs and activities including analysis and recommendations regarding:
- Participation in the Oakland County Main Street program;
 - Annual updates of the DDA's three-year Action Plan;
 - Preparation of a DDA Capital Improvement Plan to reflect the recommendations in the DDA Master Plan;
 - Consideration of revision of the enabling ordinance as well as expansion of the boundaries of the DDA;
 - Preparation of a marketing plan for enhanced use of existing and proposed public properties (i.e. Civic Theatre, Marketplace Pavilion, etc.);
 - Improved status reporting to City Council.

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McShane asked regarding the status of the three-year action plan. Pastue responded that the various committees are in different stages in development of the plan.

Knol suggested that it was time for the four Main Street committees to meet and report on the progress of their action plans. She noted that there is a need to recruit more volunteers. Mayor Campbell recommended that the DDA Board take a more active role in recruiting volunteers. Knol noted that the City has greater resources than the DDA for recruiting volunteers.

Bush stated that Council should be hearing updates from the DDA. Mayor Campbell suggested scheduling a meeting with the DDA Board to review plans for the downtown.

Pastue stated that the DDA should take a more active role in downtown development issues. McShane suggested that the DDA Board or President provide updates to Council.

Discussion followed regarding process, planning, and responsibility for downtown development. Responding to a question, Pastue advised that a meeting would be scheduled to view the signage video developed by the City planning consultants. He further advised that DDA Director Morgan would arrange a meeting with the Design Committee to address signage.

Knol asked if there are clear goals and objectives established for the DDA Director. She questioned whether Director Morgan clearly understands his role. Pastue responded that there is a current job description for the Director and that he has been asked to prepare measurable goals for the coming year.

Discussion continued regarding the need for defined goals and action plan for the DDA Director.

Mitchell suggested scheduling a meeting with the DDA board. Pastue suggested a "retreat" for the DDA board to provide the time and opportunity to develop a road map and direction. Responding to a question, Pastue stated that the DDA board meetings are well attended.

Mitchell noted that the DDA board members, as business members in the community, have a vested interest in downtown improvements. He suggested expanding the membership on that board. Knol suggested that the DDA might want to consider hiring a part-time employee to manage promotions.

Objective 3-D: Support efforts to promote appropriate redevelopment, renovation and retention programs in all commercial areas.

Pastue noted that annual meetings with the large commercial property owners provides the opportunity to promote redevelopment.

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4. GOAL: Continue the City's commitment to improve internal communications as well as information sharing with members of the community, to involve the community in key decision-processes as appropriate, and to publicly recognize individuals and organizations that demonstrate special achievement in the community.

- Objective 4-A:** Utilize a variety of means to improve information sharing about community issues to insure that residents can understand and address policy issues, including:
- Improvements to the City's website;
 - Possible creation of a dial-in phone number and/or a weblink to provide up-to-date information on the agenda of all meetings;
 - Consideration of televising council sessions;
 - Expansion of the newsletter and the calendar; and
 - Improved media coverage of issues and actions.

Pastue advised that he is preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for further development and management of the website. He stated that the RFP would be provided at the next Council meeting in September. Discussion continued regarding proposed features of the website. Discussion followed regarding electronic Council packets.

Council concurred that televising Council meetings was not a top priority due to the cost commitment and staff time. Knol noted that the website was a higher priority.

Pastue suggested publicizing the Civic Theatre and the current movie line-up on cable throughout the day. He suggested providing direct e-mails to residents interested in upcoming events. Knol indicated the need to continue cable shows on "hot issues" in Farmington, such as the proposed pavilion.

Pastue stated that future City newsletters will be limited to a two-sided sheet, containing "nuts and bolts" information only, and that it will be included with the water bill. He confirmed that there would be no change to the City calendar.

- Objective 4-B:** Explore alternatives to increase communication and information sharing with the city between staff and council members and between council and boards and commissions that provide guidance to decision-making.

McShane requested that Council receive timely e-mail updates on current issues. Council concurred that e-mail is the most effective means for receiving updates. McShane noted that important meetings should be confirmed by regular mail.

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McShane stated that it is important for Boards and Commissions to report to Council on a regular schedule. Pastue confirmed with Council the sufficiency of annual meetings unless special circumstances warrant additional ones.

Objective 4-C: Continue the Beautification Awards program sponsored by the Commission on the Environment.

Pastue advised that volunteers for this program would be meeting on September 11, 2004. He confirmed that there would be one volunteer per precinct. He speculated expressed hope that the awards ceremony would occur late September or early October.

Objective 4-D: Develop a Community Awards program to recognize the work of individuals and organizations that demonstrate special achievement in the community.

McShane noted that recognition of community members occurs at both the City dinner and through the Beautification Awards program.

Pastue asked if there were additional issues that Council would like to discuss.

McShane referred to Ohren's report in which he addressed the need for a draft of goals and objectives, the assignment of specific action strategies, and development of deadline dates and benchmarks. She noted that an Action Plan needs to be formally adopted and communicated.

Pastue stated Action Plans would be developed for projects such as: City's website, Recreation Plan and Historical Commission review. He suggested that goal setting become part of the budgeting process. Knol noted this would also help to prioritize in terms of funding. Pastue suggested periodic updates on established goals. He further advised that goal setting should be done in late March or early April before the budget is finalized.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor

PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer