

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Thursday, July 26, 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 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Campbell.

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, Director Gushman, City Manager Pastue, Attorney Schultz.

CLOSED SESSION – REVIEW OF CITY ATTORNEY OPINIONS

Mayor Campbell opened the meeting with a request for a motion to enter into closed session.

07-04-158 MOTION by Bush, seconded by McShane, to enter into closed session to consider a confidential legal opinion from the City Attorney and to consider the purchase of real property.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Campbell, Knol, McShane, Mitchell, Bush.

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council entered into closed session at 5:30 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:25 p.m.

INTRODUCE PROPOSED BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Attorney Schultz reviewed the proposed resolutions dealing with language for placement on the November 2004 General Election ballot. Schultz advised that administration identified six provisions of the charter concerning spending and employee welfare benefits that require amendments. He presented six resolutions to Council covering those provisions.

Responding to a question, Attorney Schultz stated that each provision requires a question on the ballot and that they cannot be combined.

City Manager Pastue reviewed each of the proposed resolutions as follows:

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- 1) Relating to employee retirement system benefits, eliminates the 10 years of service requirement and replaces with a reference to employees with the number of years of service credit required for retirement benefits in the City's retirement system ordinance.
- 2) Relating to employee retirement system benefits to surviving spouses, eliminates the 10 years of service requirement and replacing it with a reference to employees with the number of years of service credit required for retirement benefits in the City's retirement system ordinance.
- 3) Relating to employee contributions to the employee retirement system, eliminates existing language providing for a specific, minimum contribution by way of payroll deduction and replacing it with a general statement that employee contributions shall be as provided in applicable labor or employment contracts.
- 4) Relating to City contributions to employee retirement system, providing for an annual certification by the City to the Board of Trustees of the City's employee retirement system of any increase in pension benefits to be paid to retirants and/or beneficiaries, so that an actuarial evaluation of the true costs to the City of such increase can be made.
- 5) & 6) Taking out the \$4,000 limitation on purchase without a competitive bid and stipulating the amount would be set by ordinance.

Pastue recommended placing the four employee retirement benefit questions on the ballot and delaying the purchasing resolutions to another election.

McShane expressed concern about having six questions on a lengthy ballot because voters may not take the time to read them and then automatically vote no. She concurred with Pastue that the four retirement benefit questions are priority.

Knol stated her preference for combining the four resolutions into one question on the ballot.

Mitchell concurred to place only the four retirement benefit provisions on the ballot and to combine into one question, if possible.

Schultz stated he would speak with the Attorney General's office to see if the four resolutions can be combined into one ballot question.

DISCUSSION – PAVILION AND DOWNTOWN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Pastue advised that at a recent meeting, Grissim-Metz was informed that the pavilion would be constructed as a farmers' market/pavilion as originally planned. He further advised that construction is scheduled to begin this fall.

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Pastue discussed the concerns and issues relative to the pavilion construction. He advised that whatever parking is taken away must be replaced in some manner. He stated that donations would likely cover the cost of the pavilion. He further stated that the City would incur costs related to site work that would be part of an overall development plan. He advised that funds would come out of capital improvement until the issuance of bonds next year.

Pastue addressed issues relating to municipal street and park development. He projected that work could begin as early as the Spring of 2005. He stated the work would include adding a municipal street, park development and water service relocation. He advised that there is a wide range of options in how the park can be developed. He estimated the cost for the developing the park at \$1,000,000.

McShane asked if the park could be developed in phases, using grants and/or donations to supplement the costs.

Pastue stated that the three critical areas for financing are: special assessment of the benefiting property owners, the water system and front loading special assessments on a twenty-year bond. He stated that he does not foresee the need for a millage increase. He further stated that it would be necessary to obtain a financial advisor relative to the bond issue.

McShane asked how the project would be publicized to the community. Pastue responded that a presentation would be developed once a firm plan is in place. McShane stated that an important point to communicate is that this project will not cause an increased tax burden. Pastue noted that if the bonds are made a general obligation debt, the City could obtain a much better rate. McShane stated that the City has had success with bond issues in the past due to effective public education.

Pastue stated that the funding capacity of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should be saved for projects like a parking structure.

McShane asked if the DDA and Main Street Committee could assist in promotions and fundraising for this project. Pastue concurred to seek their assistance.

Mayor Campbell advised that the infrastructure must be established without any tie to fundraising. He further advised that aesthetics and later improvements could be funded through grants and fundraising.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Bush, Pastue stated that restrooms would be included in the pavilion.

Councilmember Mitchell asked how the eliminated parking spaces would be replaced. Pastue responded that it would depend, in part, on where the pavilion will be located.

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Pastue advised that the pavilion must be located where it would least obstruct visibility of nearby stores. He further stated that the pavilion is designed to be seen through, however, the restrooms would cause a partial obstruction.

McShane asked if the restrooms needed to be part of the pavilion. Pastue responded that they could be located elsewhere. She further asked if the trend was to go back to the original design of the pavilion. Pastue responded that no further design work has been done, but some of the original plan will be incorporated.

Responding to an additional question, Pastue stated the importance of multi-use in the design of the pavilion. He further stated that flexibility to expand must also be incorporated.

Discussion followed regarding funding of the pavilion.

Mayor Campbell requested clarification on the timing of the elements of the project. Pastue talked about the parking issues that need to be addressed prior to moving forward with the project. He stated that feedback from the Traffic and Safety Board would be important. Discussion continued regarding parking concerns. Mitchell stated that the park could be planned with future expansion in mind.

Council concurred to include angle parking throughout the project and asked Pastue to communicate this request to the architect.

McShane stated that it would be desirable to walk the dimensions of the park. Pastue stated that the area could be chalked on an early Sunday morning to provide a visual of the park.

Pastue discussed the possible need for traffic control orders to allow for timed parking. He discussed a traffic study proposed by the City planning consultants that would provide data on how to maximize on-street parking.

Bush noted the traffic problems caused by the deliveries to Cowley's off of Grand River. Discussion followed regarding options to relieve this problem, including specific hours for delivery or requiring back door deliveries only.

Discussion followed regarding the possible need for a turn signal at Grand River for traffic turning left onto Farmington Road.

Knol asked if Michigan Department of Transportation(MDOT) would fund all or part of the traffic study since there is a need due to safety reasons. Pastue responded that MDOT might argue that Grand River functions adequately in its current state, however, he would submit a request. Gushman noted that changes made by MDOT are usually the result of accident rates.

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Mitchell stated that he would like to see the utility poles relocated. Attorney Schultz noted the expense of this type of project.

Gushman advised that the utility lines were buried on Farmington Road because they were extremely old and had numerous service problems. Schultz questioned whether the utility lines could be buried in the state right-of-way. Mitchell noted that Detroit Edison had buried utility lines for Farmington Hills along Grand River.

Council concurred to move forward with the traffic safety study.

Knol expressed the need to meet with the State on numerous issues related to Grand River. She stated that Council should meet with them now while the master plan is still under review.

Mayor Campbell asked about the status of the traffic signals. Pastue discussed the different options and estimated the cost at \$300,000 for Farmington Road.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated that the City planner typically includes signage costs as part of their proposed plans.

Mayor Campbell questioned whether refinishing the parking on Grove Street would affect the Center Holding Property (T.J. Maxx Center). Pastue responded that the Center would likely be affected and benefit from the refinishing.

FOLLOW-UP FROM JULY 13 SPECIAL MEETING

RECREATION PLAN

Pastue asked Council to consider the composition of a recreation committee. He suggested five to seven members including members from Farmington Hills, Farmington Public Schools and a few community members. He advised that much of the recreation plan is already in place. He further advised that a resolution establishing a recreation plan committee would be provided at the next regular Council meeting.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated that objectives for the committee have already been established.

Discussion followed regarding the composition of the committee. Knol and McShane expressed support for including representatives from Farmington Hills and the schools.

Mayor Campbell recommended also including a representative from the Mayor's Youth Council, and a member from the Planning Commission as one of the community representatives.

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Knol requested to leave the number of committee members open to seven in case there is high interest from the community.

GOVERNOR WARNER MANSION

Pastue discussed the funding, operations and capital outlay for the Mansion. He estimated the annual cost for operating the Mansion at \$50,000.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated that monies received from use of the Mansion grounds are deposited as donations. Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell explained the different revenue accounts. Responding to an additional question, Pastue confirmed that the Mansion only took in approximately \$4,000 for FY 2003/04.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated that he could do some research to determine a reasonable fee for use of the Mansion grounds.

McShane asked about the number of visitors to the Mansion who are not associated with its operations. She also questioned if Wednesday is the most ideal day for the Mansion to be opened to visitors.

Mayor Campbell noted that Council would need to prioritize goals for the City Manager.

Council concurred to address the remaining agenda items at the next special meeting.

07-04-159 MOTION by Bush, seconded by Knol, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor

PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer