

JOINT/FARMINGTON/FARMINGTON HILLS/BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

6:40 PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013

Huron River Hunting & Fishing Club

22575 Farmington Rd

Farmington, MI 48336



FINAL

**JOINT MEETING OF THE FARMINGTON AND FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCILS AND
THE FARMINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

A joint meeting of the Farmington Public Schools Board of Education and the Farmington and Farmington Hills City Councils was held on Tuesday, April 16, at the Huron River Hunting & Fishing Club, 22575 Farmington Road, Farmington, MI. The meeting was hosted by the Farmington City Council.

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM by Mayor J.T. (Tom) Buck.

City of Farmington Council Members: Mayor Tom Buck, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Galvin, Greg Cowley and Kristin Kuiken
ABSENT: JoAnne McShane

City of Farmington Representatives: City Manager Vince Pastue, Executive Assistant Cheryl Poole, City Clerk Sue Halberstadt

Farmington Hills City Council Members: Mayor Barry Brickner, Randy Bruce, Mayor Pro-Tem Richard Lerner, Ken Massey and Cheryl Oliverio
ABSENT: Nancy Bates, Michael Bridges

Farmington Hills City Representatives: City Manager Steve Brock, City Clerk Pam Smith, Assistant City Manager Dave Boyer

Public Schools Board of Education Members: President Frank Reid, Karen Bolsen, Priscilla Brouillette, and Sheilah Clay
ABSENT: George Gurrola, Murray Kahn, Howard Wallach

Farmington Public Schools Representatives: Sue Zurvalec, Superintendent; Diane Bauman, Director of School and Community Relations Services; Catherine Cost, Assistant Superintendent; Michele Harmala, Associate Superintendent; Jon Manier, Executive Director of Instructional Services; Mary Reynolds, Executive Director, Business; Jon Riebe, Director of Facilities Management; and David Ruhland, Associate Superintendent

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Buck welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested introductions from participants.

FACILITIES FORWARD OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Jon Riebe, Director of Facilities Management, gave a presentation on the recommendations of the Facilities Forward Steering Committee (FFSC) on the proposed upgrade and enhancement of the Schools' instructional and support facilities.

Mr. Riebe discussed the process by which the FFSC developed their proposal.

Mr. Riebe further presented the recommendation of the Capital Finance Planning Task Team (CFPTT) that was to move forward with implementation of the FFSC recommendation by asking voters to approve a bond proposal for \$222 million.

Mr. Riebe discussed the financial options available in funding the renovations including a bond issue and sinking fund. The bond issue was found to be the most viable option structured for 25-years and sold in 3 series. He stated the average cost to homeowners would be between \$8-10 per month.

Mr. Riebe indicated the recommendation is to place the bond proposal on the August ballot. He stated the reasons for choosing an August election included: construction could begin the following summer; yearly costs of repairs and capital improvements are becoming unmanageable; and interest rates are low.

Mayor Brickner noted Congress is considering the elimination of tax free municipal bonds.

Mr. Riebe responded the committee and current legal counsel has not brought this up as a concern.

City Manager Brock asked regarding LEED certified construction incorporating sustainable energy in the proposal.

Mr. Riebe responded any new construction would be energy efficient. He stated it would be difficult to achieve LEED certification because the proposal is for reconstruction rather than new buildings.

Councilmember Galvin asked regarding the status of vacant school properties and bringing them back into the tax roll.

Mr. Ruhland responded they are not acting on this property until the needs of the schools are determined. He stated based on the FFSC recommendation, they now know what properties will not be utilized. He stated he will be bringing his recommendation to the Board of Education to market that property. He noted they are leaning towards demolishing the Maxfield Training Center building. He stated the value is in the land, not the building. He spoke about other school properties that need to be updated or moved.

City Manager Brock felt that the estimated cost to the taxpayers seemed too low

for the majority of taxpayers and suggested another review of those estimates.

Councilmember Kuiken expressed concern that the increasing millage rate would make the community less attractive to young families given the current millage rate is already higher than some of the surrounding communities.

Mr. Riebe responded to retain and attract more students the recommended upgrades are necessary to compete with surrounding communities.

Councilmember Cowley asked about the demographic forecast and how declining enrollment will likely be an issue twenty-five years out. He expressed concern that the community is rapidly pricing itself out of the market in terms of investment and young families. He asked what happens if the millage fails.

Mr. Ruhland responded they would go to Plan B which would require \$90 million to upgrade the buildings enough to be sustainable. They would have to go back to the voters with a different plan.

Councilmember Cowley expressed concern that voters would be besieged by both millage increases from the school and both cities.

Mayor Buck pointed out that as a community we are not doing additive math. He stated we are each looking at our numbers in isolation and determining how our objectives will be met. He expressed concern that our millage rates will be cost prohibitive to young families who might otherwise move here.

Responding to a question from Karen Bolsen, Mayor Buck cited future major projects in Farmington including a parking structure that might require a millage increase. He asked how we can keep from pricing ourselves out of the market and accomplish our objectives at the same time.

Responding to a question from Karen Bolsen, City Manager Pastue stated the City's debt levy compared to other cities is very low.

Mayor Buck noted we are not just looking at debt ratio, but the millage taxpayers see on their bill.

Councilmember Cowley pointed out Farmington's total millage rate is in the top five in Oakland County. He noted high millage rates can deter developers.

Dr. Massey asked if community groups will have access to the new facilities outside of school hours. He noted the Emergency Preparedness Commission holds a very popular program twice a year that requires a larger facility. He discussed the difficulties they have had in the past in scheduling programs at the schools.

Dr. Massey pointed out that missing from Mr. Riebe's presentation is supporting data that a reconfiguration of the learning environment increases student performance.

Discussion followed regarding how the schools are meeting vocational and technology needs of the students.

JOINT TASK FORCE

WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND WHERE DO WE GO

Frank Reid, President of the Farmington Board of Education, provided an update on the activities of the Joint Intergovernmental Task Force. He reviewed the history of the task force, the guiding principles, and the shared activities/services currently in place.

Mr. Reid stated one of the recommendations of the task force was to combine the dispatch services of Farmington and Farmington Hills. He noted this service has now been combined and the savings are now accruing to the total community.

Mr. Reid discussed other achievements of the task force including: maintenance of school properties and availability of athletic fields that include a dog park. He stated they determined no further savings could be realized on energy/diesel fuel bulk purchase.

Mr. Reid noted IT resource sharing between Farmington and Farmington Hills is moving forward.

Mr. Reid shared that the task force needs more input regarding what other joint ventures can be pursued that would provide economic benefits to the community. He requested ideas be forwarded to Cheryl Poole at the City of Farmington.

Discussion followed regarding bulk purchases including those through the Michigan Intergovernmental Network (MITN).

Councilmember Galvin spoke about the importance of repurposing properties that would increase the tax base. He noted every year the school properties sit costs the City revenue.

OTHER ISSUES OF INTEREST

CPR Training Update

Diane Bauman, Director of School and Community Relations Services, stated the schools partnered with the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills to once again hold CPR training for senior high students. She noted last year 150 students were trained in CPR and approximately the same number will be trained this year.

Michele Harmala, Assistant Superintendent, advised they met with the 7th and 9th grade health teachers to discuss incorporating CPR training into the curriculum. She stated the teachers did not see how they could add the training given other state mandated curriculum requirements.

Dr. Massey asked how we can be more creative in reaching more students for CPR training. He pointed to a recent report from the Heart Association that indicated the Detroit area has a .6% out of hospital save rate whereas Seattle has a 21% save rate. He noted the difference is teaching CPR in the schools.

Dr. Massey stated the schools should be able to find two hours in the curriculum for CPR training. He noted both cities and Botsford Hospital have expressed support for this issue.

Ms. Harmala stated the teachers understand the importance of this issue, but cannot incorporate given the curriculum requirements at this time.

Dr. Massey expressed the importance for the schools to take a leadership role on this issue.

F2H Fit Challenge

Richard Lerner, Farmington Hills Mayor Pro-Tem, provided an update on the success of F2H Fit Challenge. He reviewed the features of the Fit website and the promotion efforts being made in the community. He encouraged the public to join a group.

Suicide Prevention Task Force

Dr. Massey advised the Farmington Area Suicide Task Force was formed as a result of the efforts of himself, Nancy Bates and Dr. Randy Bruce to address the issue of suicide threats and attempts.

Dr. Massey stated the mission of the task force is to get information into the hands of citizens so they understand the signs of mental illness and depression. He stated their motto is "let's talk about it."

Dr. Massey noted the approach of the task force is to produce literature that can be distributed as a basis for discussion at resource tables during community conversations.

Dr. Massey discussed the community conversation approach where meetings are held every 3-4 months. He identified some of the topics addressed at these meetings.

Dr. Massey spoke about efforts in the surrounding communities to address this issue. He identified successes as a result of this program.

Dr. Massey stated the program is completely funded through a memorial fund established by he and his wife, Katherine, after their son died. He noted fundraising efforts in the community that will provide additional opportunities to bring in subject material experts.

Dog Park Update

City Manager Brock thanked Farmington Public Schools for use of the William Grace Elementary property for a city dog park. He noted several hundred families have signed up to use the park which has been in operation for about a year. He spoke about how the park is structured and the training requirements of dog owners.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Mayor J.T. Buck

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

Approval Date: May 20, 2013