



FINAL

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

A Special Study Session meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on September 3, 2013, in Conference Room A, Farmington City Hall, Farmington, MI. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor J.T. Buck.

1. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
J.T. Buck	Mayor	Present	
Greg Cowley	Councilmember	Present	
William Galvin	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
JoAnne McShane	Councilmember	Present	
Steve Schneemann	Councilmember	Present	

City Administration Present

Director Christiansen
City Clerk Halberstadt
City Manager Pastue

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Greg Cowley, Councilmember
AYES:	Buck, Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

4. BOARD AND COMMISSION INTERVIEWS

A. Karla Aren - Zoning Board of Appeals

Council interviewed Karla Aren for an open seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

B. Carol Ahmed - Beautification Award and Committee

Council interviewed Carol Ahmed for an open seat on the Beautification Award and Committee.

5. OPEB BOND UPDATE

A. Discussion - OPEB Bond Update (Negotiated Versus Competitive Sale)

Pastue discussed a letter from The PFM Group that provides a description and discussion of two sale methods for the OPEB bonds: competitive and negotiated. The letter recommended Farmington use the negotiated method given the current state of the Michigan municipal bond market and the flexibility it allows.

Responding to a question from McShane, Pastue advised there is very little difference in cost between the two sale methods. He further pointed out the negotiated method may secure a better rate than through competitive bids.

Responding to a further question from McShane, Pastue stated a number of government entities in the area have used the negotiated sale method. He discussed the advantages of that method.

Galvin asked regarding the market fairness analysis discussed in the letter.

Pastue responded he would anticipate that the bond authorization resolution would give the City the ability to authorize the analysis.

Cowley expressed support for a negotiated sale given the negative economic climate caused by the Detroit bankruptcy.

Discussion continued regarding the merits of a negotiated sale.

Buck confirmed with Pastue that the fee difference between the two methods would be inconsequential and also that a competitive bid could be refused.

Pastue pointed out there are very few communities that would be eligible to issue OPEB bonds based on criteria that includes debt level and bond rating.

Council expressed support for a negotiated sale.

6. VISIONING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A. Discussion - Implementation Plan for Visioning Action Items

Pastue reviewed his comments on each of the priority action items listed in the recently completed visioning project summary report. He pointed out the best opportunity to achieve the greatest tax growth is connecting the area that includes: the school administration property, Shiawassee Park, Maxfield Training Center property, the downtown and Riley Park.

Discussion followed regarding the availability of volunteer resources to assist in planning, such as the local colleges and universities.

Discussion continued regarding the advent of organic groups such as one that has organized to address biking paths.

Buck stated the City must develop a consciousness regarding walkability in terms of how to get downtown from the neighborhoods and what barriers currently exist.

McShane encouraged City administration to include younger people on the Complete Streets Committee.

Christiansen discussed involvement of the younger population in addressing changes to the existing network of sidewalks and development of a biking network as well.

Schneemann expressed strong support for reinventing the Traffic and Safety Committee. He liked the idea of inviting young people to serve on ad-hoc committees, but stressed the importance of showing results so they stay committed and involved. He pointed out there are plans already in place for connectivity in the downtown.

Discussion followed regarding re-purposing the Masonic Lodge and the challenges of its historic designation.

Discussion continued regarding engagement of school administration regarding the sale of their properties in Farmington.

In a discussion regarding downtown parking, Cowley recommended establishing a parking authority that would help to consolidate private lots for public parking, consider installing meters on Grand River, etc.

Buck stated this might be a good time to start thinking about a parking deck. He pointed out parking needs to be made a priority before a parking authority can be established.

Discussion continued regarding the need for additional parking in the downtown including adding spaces on Grand River.

Discussion followed regarding development and marketing of publicly owned properties that would evolve into new revenue generating uses.

Pastue cautioned the City would not realize much of a payoff from any of the properties designated for redevelopment in the next budget year.

Pastue will develop work plans to support the priority actions.

Cowley advised getting professional help in developing and following through on the work plans.

Pastue advised the first priority is the study area, i.e Maxfield Training Center, Shiawassee Park, Riley Park and downtown.

Responding to a question from Galvin, Pastue stated that whoever purchases the Maxfield Training Center must comply with the City's land use plan for that site. He noted one of the first things developers want to know is the City's vision for the property.

Responding to a question from McShane, Pastue stated the visioning goals will become part of the goals set by Council.

McShane pointed out a communication plan should be a key element of the work plans. She noted the importance of providing ongoing progress reports to the public.

7. CANCELLATION AND RESCHEDULING OF SEPTEMBER 16 MEETING

1. Discussion - Cancellation and Rescheduling of September 16 Meeting

Council concurred not to re-schedule the September 16, 2013 regular meeting.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Christiansen announced the Farmington Tennis Club was recently purchased by the owner of Total Sports in Wixom. They will be bringing Total Sports to Farmington.

Buck asked about appointment of candidates interviewed earlier.

Discussion followed regarding qualifications and placement of the candidates.

Schneemann suggested appointing Aren to the ZBA as an alternate and encourage her to serve on the DDA Design Committee.

1. Council Appointments to the Board of Zoning Appeals and Beautification Committee

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
SECONDER:	William Galvin, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Buck, Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann

MOTION to appoint Karla Aren to the Board of Zoning Appeals to fill an unexpired term ending June 30, 2014; and Carol Ahmed to the Beautification Committee to fill an unexpired term ending June 30, 2015.

9. COUNCIL COMMENT

McShane expressed concern regarding two decisions made by the Planning Commission this year that allowed businesses to sell items on their lawns. She noted that previously the City provided training for Planning Commission members.

Pastue pointed out the Planning Commission has the latitude to make those decisions.

Discussion followed regarding the basis on which the Planning Commission made those decisions.

Pastue suggested it is time to bring together the Planning Commission and Council to discuss City zoning standards.

Cowley announced a fundraiser for the City ice rink is planned for September 28th at Cowley's restaurant.

Buck referred to a memo from Karen Gara concerning the City's response to her parking concerns. He believes the City risked losing credibility by not following through with its commitment to protecting parking spaces for her establishment during the hours of operation of the Farmers Market. He stated the City needs to follow through and see what would work.

Pastue will meet with Director Schulz to determine how this concern can be addressed.

Discussion followed regarding adding more parking spaces on Grand River and the need for a traffic study to provide supportive data towards that end.

10.ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Greg Cowley, Councilmember
SECONDER:	JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
AYES:	Buck, Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 PM.

Mayor J.T. Buck

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

Approval Date: _____