

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
STUDY SESSION

A study session of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, February 16, 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.

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

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, Director Gushman (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), City Manager Pastue.

Mayor Campbell opened the meeting with a request that City Manager Pastue address the first agenda item concerning the reorganization of the Clerk/Treasury Department. City Manager Pastue stated that the need to reorganize is primarily due to an increasing workload experienced by staff. He stated that many municipalities have abandoned the combination of clerk/treasurer function due to the diversity and complexity of the responsibilities. He also noted that in the future it would be difficult to recruit someone who would be qualified in both areas.

Pastue recommended the creation of an Assistant Finance Director position as the first step in the process of separating the Clerk/Treasurer Department. He stated that this process would allow Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell to focus on more complex financial issues, particularly the retirement and retiree health care systems. In terms of financial impact, Pastue indicated that within the department there are currently two vacancies, a full-time and part-time, that could be consolidated into the Assistant Finance Director position, with an additional salary requirement of \$8,000 to \$15,000.

Discussion followed regarding the organizational structure of the department. Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell stated that due to increased workload it has become more and more difficult to cross-train as the department was originally set up to do. She further noted the improbability of recruiting someone qualified in both areas. Discussion followed regarding the increasing complexity of the pension area and the potential liability to the City. Discussion continued regarding the current organization of the department and the responsibilities of the Deputy Treasurer and the Deputy Clerk.

Mayor Campbell spoke about the space limitations of the department. He commended Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell for an efficient, well-trained department. Discussion followed regarding use of conference room B as a short-term option for easing the space issue.

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Council agreed with the addition of an Assistant Finance Director and the use of conference room B by the Clerk/Treasurer department.

Cantrell briefly spoke about recently enacted legislation concerning election consolidation. She stated that effective January 1, 2005, elections would be restricted to four fixed dates each year with a possible "floater" date extended to Schools. She recommended that school elections be scheduled on regular election dates in order to avoid additional costs to the schools and time and effort by the City. Council asked Cantrell, in conjunction with the Farmington Hills Clerk's office, to provide a position paper with recommendations on election consolidation.

City Manager Pastue addressed the next agenda item concerning 2004-05 budget issues. Pastue suggested that through belt-tightening measures and increases in City fees, current services could be maintained without increasing millage. He noted, however, that this approach would leave little flexibility for improvements in the downtown area. He spoke about options for increasing revenue such as attaching fees to such programs as leaf and hazardous waste collections. He offered belt-tightening options such as eliminating or paring down functions such as Mayor Exchange Day or the holiday recognition dinner. Discussion followed regarding ways in which the recognition dinner could be modified.

Discussion continued regarding the costs of jointly funded programs. Responding to a question, Pastue stated he would provide Council with a summary of their annual expenses. He spoke about restructuring the millage allowing a greater portion of it to go to the General Fund. Mayor Campbell expressed his support of a millage increase if it became necessary. Council member Knol stated her support for cost-cutting measures and reallocation of funds. Council member Mitchell also expressed his support for cost-cutting measures, but expressed his desire to preserve the sidewalk millage with concurrence from Mayor Campbell. Director Gushman discussed the expectation of residents regarding their leaf pick-up. Discussion followed regarding modification of the leaf program.

In addressing additional revenue sources, discussion turned to options for maximizing the sale of the old courthouse property. Pastue noted that Farmington Hills would need to be involved in the decision-making process for the sale of this property.

Discussion followed regarding how and to what extent the City would be involved with financing improvements in the downtown district. Discussion continued regarding funding for a downtown parking structure and other smaller projects.

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Discussion turned to library funding and the option of the Library seeking its own millage. Discussion continued regarding the move by the Library Board to reduce hours at the Farmington Library in order to reduce expenses.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

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ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor

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PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer