

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION
FEBRUARY 6, 2012

A study session of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, February 6, 2012, 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 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Buck.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buck, Cowley, Galvin, Kuiken, McShane.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

02-12-018 MOTION by McShane, seconded by Cowley, to approve the agenda as amended; moving "Public Comment" to Item No. 3. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Buck reviewed the history and process the City has followed in their consideration of consolidating Farmington Dispatch with Farmington Hills.

He opened the floor for public comment.

Greg Garden, 34067 Grand River, questioned the impact of the combined dispatch on the City.

Pastue responded discussions regarding joint dispatch have taken place over the last nine months. He discussed the City's efforts to cut costs in other areas, noting this is the 5th consecutive year property values have declined. He stated there is still a lot of work to be done before consolidation can take place.

Greg Garden, 34067 Grand River, asked about anticipated savings. Pastue responded the amount of actual savings is still unclear, but perhaps \$75,000 to \$100,000. Garden also asked about other services that could be cut such as SMART and leaf pick-up. Pastue responded SMART is not a city service and residents directly pay for leaf pick-up as part of their tax assessment.

Cowley pointed out it's not just a \$100,000 problem, that the numbers are a lot bigger than that.

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Further discussion was held on the budget impact of declining property values as well as other factors that affect the financial forecast.

Ann Marie Kurzniec, 23625 Warner, asked for an explanation of the larger than \$100,000 deficit problem identified by Cowley.

Pastue responded the deficit is a result of an ongoing decline in taxable property values and a continuing decline in state funding.

David Simowski, 23625 Warner, inquired about the reality of joint dispatch. Pastue discussed a few details relative to how 911 calls and other nonemergency calls would be handled.

Further discussion was held on operational changes that were anticipated to occur.

Mayor Buck indicated there are three primary strategies to address the City's deficit: 1) increase millage; 2) trim costs (i.e. staff and/or compensation); and 3) sale of properties.

Cowley stated the City cannot afford its current model. He asked who would pay 10 mills more to continue current services.

Robert Brow, 36509 Saxony, indicated he would pay to continue current services.

McShane discussed other services that could be on table or a separate police/fire millage.

Pastue advised a police/fire millage would provide a structured revenue stream, but he cautioned it may create a "us versus them" among City staff. He would prefer to increase overall operating millage to ensure a well-balanced city.

Maria Putt, 31528 Marblehead, inquired regarding services that would be cut and at what cost to the community. She expressed concern regarding the elimination of lock up and dispatch and how it would impact the City. She stressed ordinance enforcement is important in maintaining property values.

Pastue stated consideration of a joint dispatch is simply a matter of economics.

Discussion was held on the consequences of a decreasing General Fund.

Ann Marie Kurzniec, 23625 Warner, inquired if there was a guarantee on future costs as proposed for joint dispatch.

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Greg Garden, 34067 Grand River, stated that a joint dispatch is not a long term fix and he would pay additional tax dollars to keep our community safe.

Tim McGee, 23708 Warner, stated he believed joint dispatch is a mistake and that the issue needs further discussion. He stated the communities that were used for comparison are not in line with the City of Farmington and its uniqueness. He would like more public hearings and discussion on the topic.

Scott Saxton, 33724 Oakland, stated the issue needs further group discussion before changes are made.

Hank Borgman, 34011 Grand River, discussed cost and logistics of the Streetscape when it was first proposed. He supports maintaining current police and fire service.

Betty Borgman, 34011 Grand River, stated that a catalyst is needed to get the City to think as one unit.

Maria Putt, 31528 Marblehead, stated the impact of making this change will last for years. She noted the players will change as well as personalities and local control will erode.

REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND DRAFT WORK PLAN

Pastue reviewed an updated work plan in support of Council goals.

McShane advised that a strategic mission statement needs to be very specific and action oriented.

Cowley indicated specifics will come as a result of market analysis, that it will provide a wealth of knowledge and provide a demographic.

Mayor Buck stated it would be helpful to understand how to describe ourselves.

Kuiken described a business investment guide on the City of Northville's website that is very helpful. She affirmed the value of having family oriented activities.

Galvin indicated that at the January goal setting meeting, the facilitator advised the City define an attitude and then determine how to achieve it. He inquired if a branding study would help with developing that vision or attitude. He asked regarding the next step in identifying it.

Cowley advised a branding study has already been completed and needs to be executed.

Further discussion was held regarding branding and the market analysis

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supporting it.

Pastue stated a mission statement may serve the City well.

Discussion followed regarding the kind of data a market analysis would provide.

Pastue indicated Oakland County can provide data that identifies the kinds of businesses the City should try to recruit.

Discussion followed on how to redefine public opinion of Farmington.

Further discussion was held on incorporating the 2010 census data to help identify the needs of the City and how to attract young professional families.

Discussion continued on the means of delivering the message to realtors and how to disseminate information.

Cowley suggested scheduling a work session to review the results of the branding study.

Kuiken stated she will provide the City of Northville's investment guide.

Mayor Buck will provide samples as well. He also indicated North Star owes the City a brand audit.

Cowley said a marketing firm should be utilized.

DISCUSSION – GRANICUS PROPOSAL FOR THE CITY OF FARMINGTON

City Manager Pastue demonstrated the features of Granicus software including: access to Council meetings, both live and on demand, via the web; and improved efficiency of meetings in terms of accessing meeting agendas and supporting documents.

DISCUSSION – CIVIC THEATER BOND REDEMPTION

Pastue recommended City Council consider paying off the remaining debt on the Civic Theater. He indicated the Civic debt is programmed for payment through 2015. He stated the City would save approximately \$29K in interest payments over the next three years.

Discussion followed regarding the costs and benefits of paying down the debt.

Pastue advised formal action on this item would be taken at the February 16, 2012 meeting.

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OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS

Pastue discussed the following business items with Council:

- City Manager and Mayor will alternate in attending the 8 Mile Boulevard meetings.
- Confirmed February 16, 2012 as the change in date for the next regular meeting.
- Confirmed Plante Moran training for Council members.
- Received Council support for reducing the Downtown Development Authority Board from 11 to 9 members.
- Confirmed Council attendance at the March 5, 2012 Special Council meeting.
- Discussed appointments to the Corridor Improvement Authority.
- Received Council agreement to compromise on the Grove Street sign.

COUNCIL COMMENT

McShane congratulated fellow Councilmembers on their decision at the January 30, 2012 special meeting to opt back into SMART given the additional service that was offered.

Discussion followed regarding how to best communicate the additional service that will be offered.

Responding to a question from McShane, Pastue stated a realtor had not yet been hired to sell the court property.

Discussion followed regarding the importance of interviewing realtors to find the best fit.

Galvin asked about Administration's progress in issuing RFP's for contractors providing services to the City.

Pastue advised the RFP's are on 4-year cycles and the Audit RFP is just about ready to go.

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Buck stressed the importance of understanding why we are bidding out for a given service.

Cowley pointed out DDA events made a profit for the first time in 2011. He spoke about the many accomplishments of the DDA and goals for 2012. He would like the DDA Director to discuss the results of the 2011 calendar of events with Council.

Buck noted e-mails received recently concerning the denial by the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance on a nonconforming treehouse.

ADJOURNMENT

O2-12-019 MOTION by McShane, seconded by Kuiken, to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

J.T. (Tom) Buck, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: March 19, 2012