

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
FEBRUARY 26, 2018

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Massey at 6:00pm

Council Members Present: Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey, Rich and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: Bridges

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, Directors Barr, Gardiner and Mondora and City Attorney Joppich

AMENDMENT TO POVERTY EXEMPTION GUIDELINES

Matt Dingman, City Assessor, explained that each community is required to adopt poverty exemption guidelines per state law. He reviewed the process and proposed changes to the guidelines with Council.

The following changes were suggested:

- Removing pension and IRA's as examples of liquid assets under Section V. Asset Guidelines
- Re-wording the last sentence in Section I, General Overview, with regard to a potential denial of an appeal so that it does not portray a negative connotation.

Discussion was held on alternate wording for Section 1, General Overview. Attorney Joppich stated that he would work on wording that would soften that sentence but also comply with the state statute.

Councilmember Bruce preferred to keep in the various examples of liquid assets including pension and IRA's so as not to restrict the Board of Review and that decision should be made on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Dingman pointed out that in probably 99% of the applications submitted, the asset test is not an issue and most are denied based on the income.

Councilmember Rich expressed concern with the following language: "The value of all assets of the applicant shall not exceed five (5) times the annual household income of the applicant or those contributing to the expenses of the household". She was concerned that someone's income could significantly drop due to job loss or change in job and they would then not meet the criteria.

AMENDMENT TO CITY INVESTMENT POLICY

Steve Barr, Finance Director, explained that the City's Investment Policy was last updated in 2012 and is governed by Public Act 20. He reviewed the proposed changes that he said would make the city's investing more conservative but with the best possible yield.

City Council had no questions on the policy amendments. The policy would be on the regular meeting agenda for consideration and action.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – BOND FUNDING

Mark Stec, City Planner, provided a development update outlining new construction projects and expansions over the past year.

Discussion was held on obtaining proper bonding for the projects as some projects had started construction and then stopped due to financing issues.

Councilmember Knol suggested that the city use some bond money for the development along Orchard Lake Road to restore the site to field grass until construction progresses.

Ed Gardiner, Planning and Community Development Director explained the different bonds that the city requires, including clean-up bonds and open space bonds that the city could use to restore sites. Staff believed that some progress was being made with the Orchard Lake Road development and that it was not at the point to use bond money to restore the site.

Karen Mondora, Director of Public Services, also outlined the various deposits that the city's engineering division requires in order to make sure projects are complete.

Due to the time constraints, Mayor Massey suggested that this issue is brought back to the next study session meeting for continued discussion.

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:28pm

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk