

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
NOVEMBER 13, 2017

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

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

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, Directors Barr and Schnackel, Court Administrator Walsh and City Attorney Joppich

DISCUSSION ON MICHIGAN INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION PLAN

Dave Walsh, Court Administrator-47th District Court, stated that he provided Council with a cover letter explaining the process, the Commission Plan and frequently asked questions. He explained that the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC) was created in 2013 to develop and oversee criminal defense services for indigent adults and ensure they met constitutional requirements. He noted that all counties in Michigan were found deficient with regard to meeting indigent defense requirements.

Mr. Walsh reported that the MIDC approved the first four (4) standards on May 22, 2017 and set the submission date for compliance plans for November 20, 2017. He explained that the plan falls under the executive branch so it is a city plan; however, the City Managers of both Farmington Hills and Farmington designated him to form a work group of stakeholders to evaluate the current local process and draft a compliance plan to be submitted by the cities. Before the Council this evening for review is the plan together with a cost analysis for implementing the plan in the amount of approximately \$240,000.

Mr. Walsh stated that if the compliance plan was not submitted by November 20, 2017, the cities would still be held to specific standards without the ability to receive any funding.

Mr. Walsh added that once the plan is submitted, the MIDC has 60 days in which to approve the plan and cost analysis and then has to seek state funding for the compliance plans submitted. If that is accomplished, the systems must comply with all standards of the plan within 180 days of receiving funds. Per the timeline, it appears as if the communities would be receiving funding in advance of being required to implement the plan. He added that the \$240,000 is to implement the plan for the 47th District Court and he expects would exceed millions of dollars to implement plans around the state.

Council concurred with having city staff submit the proposed plan on behalf of the cities by the deadline of November 20, 2017.

FACILITIES REPURPOSING:

City Manager Boyer explained that back in 2014/15 the Farmington Public Schools formed a site review committee to study the needs of the district with regard to facilities in response to student enrollment trends. The Schools determined that they would close Harrison High School, along with several other elementary or middle schools. The value of the property alone is approximately \$4 million and to tear down the building would cost approximately \$2.5 million and the community would be losing potential amenities. City staff and the schools initiated discussions of repurposing the building in a joint effort in

which the schools would retain the top floor for administration offices and utilize an area for their bus yard and the city would lease the bottom two floors to convert to a community center. This concept was previously brought to City Council and Council approved funding to conduct a study and tonight the architects are here to present the proposed design concept for the building.

George Kacan, Sidock Group, Inc. discussed the process used in determining the proposed design for the building that included researching the space, activities, new and existing equipment and identifying site and facility opportunities. He presented the proposed site plans and floor plans and Sam Ashley of Cunningham-Limp, discussed the estimated cost of the improvements totaling between \$19-\$20 million.

Director of Special Services Schnackel added that the city would also offer expanded programming primarily for seniors out of the Costick Center. She noted that citizen survey responses showed a need for a multi-use performing arts center, Aquatic Center and more gym space. She noted that the projected cost for additional staffing and operating for the new facility and expanded programming at the Costick Center would be approximately \$2,215,000.00. She added that the projected revenue is \$1,927,000.00, which she believes to be a conservative figure.

City Manager Boyer commented that to build a new multi-purpose community center would cost approximately \$300 per square foot and with this proposal the city would also be saving 40 acres of property. Mr. Boyer stated that conversations also took place more recently about the city purchasing Harrison High School from the schools, but no formal discussion has taken place at this time.

Councilmember Knol inquired where the bus yard would be located if the city purchased the property and building from the schools. Mr. Boyer did not know where the schools were planning to locate the bus yard at this time.

Jerry Ellis, resident, stated that he was on the School Oversight Committee for the bonding and he does not feel the schools need the third floor of Harrison and that they can't put their busses at that location. He feels the building and property should be owned by the City and that if the City is going to draw millennials to this area, they need a "wow" factor like this proposed facility.

Councilmember Lerner inquired how the city would utilize the third floor assuming the city purchased the property/building.

Mr. Boyer responded that it could be used for expanded programming or partnerships and it was estimated it would cost the city an additional \$6 million to renovate and utilize the third floor.

Councilmember Knol liked the proposal, but wanted more information including the proposed location of the bus yard and where the Schools plan to put their administration offices if not on the third floor of the Harrison High School building.

Mayor Pro-Tem Steckloff felt this was a great deal for the community and that many other communities surrounding will have interest in using the center. She feels there could be a lot of partnership opportunities for the third floor if the city were to own it.

Councilmember Rich loved the proposed design and idea of owning the property and the private/public opportunities for the third floor space. She suggested that having a dedicated space for children would be a big draw for families, similar to that of the Livonia Recreation Center. Dr. Rich inquired about the possibility of a dog park on the property.

City Manager Boyer stated that they are reviewing the exterior and could consider that possibility but they want to maintain as many sports fields as possible because they keep losing fields as schools close.

Councilmember Bridges inquired about the funding.

City Manager Boyer responded that the Parks and Recreation millage funds could be used but would not be sufficient. Staff estimated \$1.7 million a year to finance the facility over and above any revenue. After reviewing the funding options, staff feels that there are opportunities to save through more efficiency that would allow for enough funding without another millage.

Mr. Brides commented that he supports the idea.

Councilmember Lerner also feels it is a great idea but agreed it should be owned by the city.

Mayor Massey summarized that it appeared all City Council members were in favor of the proposed concept and would like more information as things progress.

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk