

**MINUTES**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**MARCH 15, 2023**  
**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS**  
**COMMUNITY ROOM**  
**31555 W ELEVEN MILE ROAD**  
**FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN**

**CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN T.R. CARR AT 8:00 A.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** T.R. CARR, SCOTT ELLIOTT, SUSAN ARLIN, MARK ZACHOS, LEWIS CANTOR, SAM SLAUGHTER

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dr. Ken Massey, Council Liaison, Gary Mekjian, City Manager, Joe Valentine, Assistant City Manager, Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director, LaToya Harvey, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) & Employee Development

**EXCUSED:** F. Beiermeister, M. Brucki, E. Jeffries

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Lew Cantor, supported by Mark Brucki to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Unanimously carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Scott Elliott, supported by Sam Slaughter to approve the minutes of February 15, 2023 as submitted.  
Unanimously carried.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman T.R. Carr gave the board an update regarding the need for getting High School students interested in the skilled trades career path.

**REPORT/UPDATES FROM**

1. City Management
  - a. Gary Mekjian, City Manager, shared information regarding some enlightening economic development perspectives given by a speaker at the latest SOCMA meeting. These perspectives included the need for industrial space within the marketplace, additional housing needs, workforce development, and the struggle to reinvent office space and//or maintain office space due to capital costs.
  - b. Joe Valentine, Assistant City Manager, discussed the current phases and upcoming phases of the Master Plan update.
2. Economic Development Director
  - a. Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director, shared information regarding the City moving forward in becoming a Redevelopment Ready Community in

conjunction with the Master Plan Update. Having a Redevelopment Ready Certification for Farmington Hills would mean that the City is able to use a more streamlined, transparent process for development and tap into additional grants supplied by the Michigan Strategic Fund.

- b. Susan Arlin added that being Redevelopment Ready will allow the City a more competitive edge for businesses wanting to move.
- c. Mrs. Brockway also shared information regarding a new Blood Center moving into the City of Farmington Hills off of Orchard Lake Road. The blood center is the blood bank of choice for Corewell Health.

3. Council Liaison

- a. None.

## **BUSINESS**

1. Innovation Center

- a. Mr. Valentine gave an update regarding the status of the first lab of The Innovation Center. The progress on the space has been on evaluating the HVAC, mechanical systems, the plumbing works correctly, electrical is working correctly, however a gas valve needs to be replaced which requires the entire facility to shut down for a full day. Walls have been painted in the one lab, the office spaces have been cleared out, carpet is planned to be installed, and following that the floors will be buffed and polished. Ceiling tiles and lighting ballasts have been replaced.
- b. Ms. Arline distributed an example of the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce job description for a Director of Small Business and Entrepreneurship for their innovation center. She allowed this example for the subcommittee that will be creating job descriptions for working positions in the City's incubator. A subcommittee meeting will be put together to go over job descriptions for the Farmington Hills incubator.
- c. Mark Zachos and Dr. Ken Massey, Council Liaison, discussed the two applicants that were interested in the lab space. There is no new information regarding the timeline of their funding. There was also discussion on the operation of the space to which Mr. Valentine explained that the City of Farmington Hills will handle as the landlords until the non-profit is established.
- d. Mr. Valentine updated the board that the City received the grant agreement for some of the the incubator space. He also asked the board to send any information regarding conversations and interests they have to the City so everyone can be included once information needs to get disbursed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

## **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman T.R. Carr at 9:15 a.m.

*Minutes Drafted by Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director*