

MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING  
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
JUNE 22, 2015 – 6:00PM

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Brickner at 6:05pm.

Council Members Present: Brickner, Bridges, Knol, Lerner, Massey and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: Bruce

Others Present: City Manager Brock, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Boyer, Director Randle and Attorney Joppich

**DISCUSSION ON NOVEMBER 2015 BALLOT PROPOSALS:**

City Manager Brock explained that the City currently has two public safety millages that have been approved by the voters; both are for 10 year terms that overlap every 5 years, and one is due to expire in 2016. He discussed the impact of the Headlee Amendment and recommended that the millage is rolled back up to its originally approved amount at 1.5 mills, which would net an additional \$82,000 per year.

Councilmember Lerner inquired if the ballot language would need to reflect that this is a new millage rather than a renewal since the City is asking for additional funding.

Attorney Joppich explained that his office would be reviewing and preparing the exact ballot language and that he can certainly include language to explain that the City is rolling up an existing millage; however, Charter Amendments are limited to 100 words. He stated that he understands the concern of Council and would make every effort to include some explanation within the ballot language.

Discussion was held on the effects of Proposal A on the tax rate. City Manager Brock stated that he would have staff look back on property values and make sure that this is well explained in any millage material that is made available to the residents.

It was the consensus of Council for the City Attorney to proceed with ballot language as discussed this evening and to place the ballot language on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.

City Manager Brock explained a second potential ballot proposal. He stated that from time to time condominiums come to the City asking for assistance with improving their private roads. He noted that the residents are willing to pay but are asking for assistance with funding the project. Mr. Brock stated that he is sympathetic to their position; however, both the City Attorney and Bond Counsel agree that there are no means to allow for the City to finance private roads without an amendment to the City Charter and may possibly require a change in State law.

Attorney Joppich explained that a change in State law would be helpful and certainly make the matter more clear; however, he believes there is language in the Home Rule Cities Act that if this were a voter approved Charter Amendment to allow for this type of funding that it could stand up to a potential challenge. He added that all Charter Amendments are reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and would also confirm the legality if approved.

Further discussion was held on how the financing would work and if liens would be placed on properties. It was noted that Bond Counsel did not feel they could not bond a project for private roads with public funding.

Attorney Joppich stated that the City would need authority to spend public money for a private benefit and if Bond Counsel has indicated that this can't be done then it closes the issue.

Mayor Pro-Tem Massey commented that people need to understand their by-laws and deed restrictions when purchasing a home or condominium and he feels this should be addressed as the Homeowner's Association level.

Councilmember Knol inquired about legal liability if this did occur. Attorney Joppich stated that the City would require appropriate indemnification agreements and insurance.

It was the consensus of Council not to pursue the issue. They felt that if the City could not get bonding for the projects that a Charter Amendment would not do any good.

City Manager Brock stated that he will pass this information along to the Condominium Association. He recognized one of the association board members in the audience.

Joseph Scott, Treasurer of Golfview Pointe of Copper Creek Homeowner's Association, expressed his appreciation for the City taking up this issue and for their thorough discussion this evening. He did not expect for the City to do anything that would jeopardize their financing and only suggests that when Council considers approving a Planned Residential District (PRD) that they recognize that a Homeowner's Association will not have the ability to manage items such as future road funding. He stated that this is their issue and they will pursue other avenues. He thanked the City Council on behalf of the Association.

#### **DISCUSSION OF JOB DESCRIPTION AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE CITY MANAGER POSITION:**

Attorney Joppich stated that from discussions held at the last City Council study session and discussions with Human Resources Director Randle, he outlined a 14 step process for the selection of a new City Manager. He reviewed the process and clarified that the candidate interviews and Council deliberation and decision must be made in an open session.

Discussion was held on the time frame for posting the position and Councilmember Knol suggested that posting the position for not less than 21 days, rather than 14 days due to potential holiday/vacation schedules; and to post the job until the end of that 3<sup>rd</sup> week. Council concurred.

Mayor Brickner suggested that Council approve the committee members at their regular meeting on July 13, 2015.

Director Randle explained that there was not a formal job description for the City Manager position. He noted that most of the information he included in the proposed job description provided to Council came directly from the City Charter, but he also reviewed other job descriptions and used feedback from Council on items they felt should also be included.

Attorney Joppich explained that there are many responsibilities of the City Manager outlined within the Charter and it was necessary to consolidate that information into a job description; but anyone applying for this type of position would look to the City's Charter for all of the information.

Council concurred with the proposed job description as written.

It was noted that both the job description and selection process were on the regular agenda this evening for consideration.

Discussion was held on the process for selecting committee members. It was determined that the Mayor would provide Council with a list of names from those that he selected as well as the names submitted by other members of Council and they would vote on the issue at their July 13<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

Councilmember Lerner suggested that a study session may be needed on this prior to the regular meeting.

**The City Council recessed to go into their regular meeting at this time and resumed the study session following the regular meeting. (The study session reconvened at 8:40pm)**

Director of Central Services, Michael Lasley, explained that a committee was formed to review the city's website and develop a new design and a fresh look with the assistance of Muniweb. He reviewed some of the committee's priorities and presented the new design and features to Council.

Mr. Lasley noted that a link for the new website will be placed on the City's intranet tomorrow morning so that Council and staff will have the opportunity to review it further and maneuver within the site prior to it being released to the public. He stated that Council could send any suggested improvements or changes to him during the next few weeks. He suggested that the site could be announced and released to the public at the next regular Council meeting of July 13<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk