

MEETING MINUTES  
GRAND RIVER CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2018 – 8:00AM  
JON GRANT COMMUNITY CENTER  
29260 GRAND RIVER AVENUE  
FARMINGTON HILLS MI, 48336

**CALLED TO ORDER BY:** MAYOR MASSEY AT 8:02AM.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** GENDJAR, KUMAR, MASSEY AND SMITH

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** BRAZZLE, MANN AND VERBURG

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Gary Mekjain, Assistant City Manager; Samantha Seimer, Economic Development Director/Staff Liaison

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Kumar, support by Gendjar, to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AUGUST 2, 2018:**

The Board noted that they did not receive an electronic copy of the meeting minutes from August 2, 2018. Mayor Massey stated that both the meeting minutes from August 2 and September 6 may be presented at the next meeting.

Approval of meeting minutes tabled until next meeting.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR:**

Ms. Seimer introduced herself to the Corridor Improvement Authority. She reviewed her background stating that she was with the City of Auburn Hills for the last four and a half years. While at the City of Auburn Hills, she spent her first two years as Management Assistant while she completed her Master's in Public Administration from Wayne State University. She oversaw the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, Downtown Development Authority and Tax Increment Finance Authority and in her role helped established the Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan for the reinstating of the Downtown Development Authority.

Ms. Seimer added that she is very excited about getting to know everyone and work within the community to be the staff liaison for all businesses in Farmington Hills.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE BALLOT PROPOSAL FOR TRANSITIONING TO A LOCAL ROAD MILLAGE:**

Seimer handed out literature regarding the 2018 Local Road Ballot Proposal to the Board.

Mayor Massey reviewed that currently; local roads are paved, repaired, and rehabilitated through special assessment districts (SADs). This provision has been in the City Charter since 1973.

The Ballot Proposal is a single question that would accomplish two tasks. First, it would amend the City Charter to authorize a tax rate for local roads and infrastructure, and second, it would eliminate special assessment rolls. In by eliminating the special assessment rolls, all unpaid SAD balances will be zeroed-out and refunds would be provided to properties that have paid off the special assessment as of November 6, 2018.

Gendjar asked who is responsible for snow removal. Mayor Massey stated that public roads are cleared by the City where private roads are cleared by a private service as part of the homeowners association.

Smith asked if a road millage is unique. Mayor Massey stated that a road millage is not unique and many communities fix their local roads through a millage. Mekjain added that what is unique is the extent of care that Council has taken to ensure that everything is equitable to citizens. He added that the proposal refunds those who have paid their special assessment and would zero-out current SADs. In by doing so, nobody is overtaxed. If you have paid off your SAD early, you will be refunded.

Gendjar asked what percentage of local roads needs to be replaced. Mekjain added that in 2014 a pavement assessment was conducted which showed that 56% of local roads are in poor condition. In 2016, 10 miles of road were reconstructed. When the pavement assessment was reevaluated in 2017 the percentage of roads in poor condition increased to 58%. A 2% increase with the reconstruction of 10 miles in the previous year. A road millage would allow for a better match of funding. There is a goal of 10 miles each year, over the course of ten years. The millage creates a lifecycle management of infrastructure assets.

Gendjar asked approximately how many households are in active SADs. Mekjain reviewed that approximately 1,300 homes are in active SADs. He reminded that if the SAD has been paid off prior, you will be refunded. If the SAD is current, it will be rolled back to zero and nobody will be over taxed.

Mayor Massey added that there is an overall, indirect benefit through the rise of property values, and direct benefit to those who will receive reconstructed roads. The goal is to encourage voters to see the long-term value. He added that on average, based on home prices in Farmington Hills, tax payers can expect an increase in taxes of \$247 annually. He acknowledges that in the immediacy, this is a change, but in the long run, the roads will be taken care of.

Kumar added that it may be helpful in a PR piece to include examples from surrounding communities that have a road millage in place. He added that it will be important to look other city's best practices during this exercise.

Mayor Massey added that it is the City Council and Staff's job to inform voters of the facts of the proposal. Citizens need to be the advocates for the Ballot Proposal.

Smith asked if any groups have been formed in opposition to the Ballot Proposal. Mayor Massey stated that to his knowledge, there are no current groups in opposition. He added that it is important to get the word out to active voters in the community

Mayor Massey added that anybody who is interested in the impact of the millage, or estimated SAD payoff or refund, the finance department can give homeowners this exact information accurate to the dollar.

Gendjar asked where people can find more information about the topic. Mayor Massey encouraged members of the CIA Board to direct Farmington Hills voters to the website, on the front page there is a direct link to the Ballot Proposal Language and frequently asked questions. Mekjain added that people are encourage to call the City Manager's office at 248.871.2500.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Kumar asked if the vet façade improvements have been approved. Mekjain informed that the reimbursement for the improvement has been processed.

Smith stated that the Farmington diner has a drive approach on Grand River that needs repair. Grand River is a state highway and the business owners need a contact with the Road Commission. Mekjain noted that the drive approach is the responsibility of the business owner.

Mayor Massey stated that the Grand River CIA presents great opportunities for attraction of high density housing and medical facilities. The right tools are in place to attract good businesses to the area such as adopting areas for maintenance such as the median. Kumar added that beautifying areas will let people know when you are in Farmington Hills. He added that Beaumont plans to beautify the entry into the hospital.

Smith added that if you are not proactive about good development and improvement, communities and developments tend to revert to worsened conditions.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

It was confirmed that the next meeting date is October 4, 2018 at 8:00AM at the Jon Grant Community Center.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no objections, Mayor Massey adjourned the meeting at 8:48 AM.

Minutes drafted by:     Samantha Seimer