

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MAY 23, 2016 – 6:00PM

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 and Rich

Council Members Absent: Steckloff

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, and City Attorney Joppich

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REVIEW

Mayor Massey pointed out that some of the boards and commissions for the City were formed in the 1970's or 1980's, and he feels there is a need for an overall review of all boards and commission to hopefully creates some standardizations in the structure, number of members, appointment process and to make sure that they have clear mission statements and goals. He stated that there may be the possibility of consolidating some of the efforts. Mayor Massey added that the appointment dates may vary as some could be required by other statutes, but most appointments of the City are done in February each year.

(Councilmember Rich arrived).

Mayor Massey stated that as part of the review, he feels the budgets should be reviewed for each and that if the city is allocating money towards a board or commission they should have some oversight. He added that there are also some boards and commissions where a resolution or ordinance was never executed governing that body. He suggested that the City Council go through each board and commission alphabetically with the information provided to determine how to move forward with each and to provide for some standardization amongst all of them.

Beautification Commission

Mayor Massey stated that the Commission was created by Resolution back in 1985 that contains old language and suggested updating language in the Resolution and aligning that with the mission statement for the Commission. The Resolution called for up to 21 members, which he felt was excessive and suggested that any board or commission should have no more than 15 members.

Discussion was held on the number of members, having Co-Chairs and Co Vice-Chairs and updating the resolution to include the definition of a quorum.

Attorney Joppich stated that he was hoping to standardize some language for all boards and commissions and suggested that language could be included to clarify that a quorum constituted a majority of those members seated on the board or commission and would not take into account any vacant positions.

It was confirmed that staff and council liaisons were non-voting members.

The consensus of Council was to consider 11 members for the Beautification Commission, 8 from Farmington Hills and 3 from Farmington and 2 alternates with one alternate from each community and that they would allow for Co-Chairs or Vice Chairs.

Councilmember Rich inquired about attendance at these meetings by phone.

Attorney Joppich stated that there has been some more recent discussion on this issue and that he would provide an update on this issue to City Council.

Board of Review

Mayor Massey indicated that this Board is mandated by State statute. He questioned the salary paid to the Board of Review based on their budget. City Manager Boyer indicated that he would get that information for Council.

Attorney Joppich stated that he would review the current statute with the Tax Tribunal Attorneys in his office and provide an update or further information if necessary.

Brownfield Authority

Discussion was held on the number of members. City Manager Boyer clarified that the staff that sits on this Board are voting members.

It was mentioned that the number of members and mission statement was set by State statute

Attorney Joppich stated that he would check the statute for further updates and report back to Council.

Building Appeals Board

Mayor Massey pointed out that this Board was currently inactive. Staff felt there were members appointed but they have not met.

Attorney Joppich stated that this Board is required per State Building Code requirements and perhaps was not currently active as there have been no appeals. He noted, for example, that if a business was denied a Certificate of Occupancy, they could appeal to this Board.

Councilmember Lerner inquired if this Board could be combined with the Single-Family Review Board with all appeals going to the same Board.

Attorney Joppich stated they could possibly have the same members serve on both Boards but that they are both required at this time. He would review the State Building Codes and report back to council on both Boards.

Board of Canvassers

It was noted that local Board of Canvassers was abolished by the Governor so this Board was no longer required.

Committee for Energy and Environmental Sustainability (CEES)

Mayor Massey commented that they are supposed to have 11 members but often have difficulty getting a quorum to attend the meetings. Discussion was held on rolling this Committee into another existing board or commission.

City Manager Boyer mentioned that the Parks and Recreation Commission may make sense as this committee is staff-driven and both staff liaisons for CEES are based over in Special Services.

Discussion was held on having this committee fall under the Mayors Youth Council. It was noted that the CEES has a heavy work load that may be too much for the MYC and it was suggested that MYC members may be able to help out with certain events.

It was the consensus to consider having the CEES fall under the Parks and Recreation Commission, possibly as a subcommittee but with details on how to blend the two to be further discussed and to consider involving members of the MYC as liaisons.

Commission on Aging

Issues with the appointment process to the Commission on Aging were noted as well as keeping the Commission on task.

(Mayor Massey had to step out of the meeting and asked Mayor Pro-Tem Knol to run the meeting)

Councilmember Rich volunteered to be liaison to this group since there currently was no Council liaison. She added that when she was a member of a committee that felt they were getting off track, the group had a meeting to discuss their mission statement and goals to re-evaluate how they should move forward and she felt this could be beneficial for any board or commission.

Mayor Pro-Tem Knol suggested that the Mayor and City Manager meet with the Chair to discuss their mission statement and the appointment process.

It was noted that the Chair sets the agenda. Mayor Pro-Tem Knol stated that she does not have a problem with the Chairs setting the agenda as long as that is being done in conjunction with the staff liaison. She added that the city wants ideas and feedback from the residents.

City Manager Boyer stated that he liked the idea of the staff liaison working with the Chair on the agenda items.

Attorney Joppich stated that preparation of the agenda by the staff liaison is something that could be a general provision of an ordinance for any board or commission.

City Clerk Smith added that this would be helpful for her office as it would be easier to get the agenda from staff than various board/commission members in order to meet required deadlines.

Mr. Boyer added that some boards/commission have no staff liaison and/or City Council liaison

(Mayor Massey returned to the meeting)

Mayor Massey stated that he feels it is important for the Chairs to attend City Council study session on a regular basis to provide updates.

Councilmember Bridges inquired to Attorney Joppich if agendas are prepared as such in other communities. Attorney Joppich responded that the idea came from City Council's own rules and procedures and while the other communities he represents may not have staff liaisons due to limited staffing; he would think other large communities may be similar.

Discussion was held on the number of members for joint commissions. It was suggested having 11 members and 2 alternates with 8 members from Farmington Hills, 3 members from Farmington and 1 alternate from each community.

City Manager Boyer stated that he would discuss the joint boards/commissions with the Mayor and City Manager from Farmington.

Mayor Massey commented that he spoke to the Mayor of Farmington and he agreed in principal with the review of the boards and commissions and that the Farmington Hills City Council would take the lead on the issue and report to them.

The consensus was to discuss having the membership for joint commissions as noted above and to have Chairs work with the staff liaison, where there is one appointed, on preparation of the agendas for that board/commission.

Commission on Children, Youth and Families

Mayor Massey suggested that since Councilmember Steckloff was not present to move discussion on the Children, Youth and Families Commission to the next meeting.

Committee To Increase Voter Participation

City Clerk Smith mentioned that the Committee was discussing the issue of dis-banning prior to her appointment as Clerk due to the lack of quorum at many of their meetings and when she was appointed she met with the group and several members expressed an interest in continuing the Committee. She stated that they currently have more members than they have had in quite a while, but it is a staff-driven committee and they still are having a problem with getting a quorum for meetings and participation from the members.

Clerk Smith stated that they at one time had several students involved, which was very helpful in getting activity from the students in voter registrations drives, but they have not been able to find another student to serve.

Councilmember Lerner agreed that there are only a few members that are continually active.

Discussion was held on possibly having other boards/commission members assist with activities when needed.

Due to the time and fact that the regular Council meeting was to begin at 7:30pm, Mayor Massey indicated that discussion on boards/commissions review would continue at the next study session.

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk