

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER
SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 – 5:00 PM**

The regular session of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 5:08PM.

Councilmembers Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bruce, Dwyer, Knol, and Rich

Councilmembers Absent: Bridges

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian; Assistant City Manager Mondora; City Clerk Lindahl; Directors Aranowski, Kettler-Schmult, Rushlow and Skrobola; Police Chief Piggott, Fire Chief Unruh; City Attorney Joppich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by members of the Fire Department.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA

MOTION by Knol, support by Boleware, to approve the agenda as amended to allow public comment following ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS specifically on the Special Services Financial Sustainability Strategic Action Plan, which was presented during the study session prior to this meeting.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS FROM CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS
PRESENTATION OF BREAST CANCER AWARENESS SHIRTS TO CITY COUNCIL BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Sergeant Nick Newcomb, Farmington Hills Fire Department, presented Breast Cancer Awareness T-shirts to City Council. He noted that proceeds from the \$30 shirts, available at Station 5, support local women undergoing cancer treatment through the department's long-standing partnership with Corewell Cancer Center. He also highlighted other Charity Fund programs, including *Heroes on Wheels* (bikes for children) and *Feeding the Seniors* (Thanksgiving meals).

Dan Fantore, Commission on Aging Chair, appreciated having a realistic timeline for a new senior center. He raised concerns about the deteriorating condition of the Costick Center. He was also concerned about the possibility of a new senior center at the HAWK, noting that many seniors oppose relocating services to the Hawk facility, citing issues such as fragmented programming across multiple floors, limited and small elevators, challenging traffic and parking conditions, and the lack of an adequate kitchen to support Meals on Wheels and other senior meal programs. The Commission on Aging believes that an effective senior center should be located on a single floor, with sufficient accessibility and facilities. While many users support construction of a new senior center on the Costick Center grounds, they also recognize the potential value of redeveloping that land. Mr. Fantore stated that if the sale of the Costick property offsets costs and avoids a tax increase, an alternative site may be preferable. He further noted that redevelopment of the Costick Center land could generate ongoing tax revenue that should be dedicated to funding a new senior center.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON STUDY SESSION ITEM

Loraine Daro, resident, urged City Council to take immediate action on establishing a new senior center, expressing frustration over delays and the continued discussion of the Hawk facility, which she noted had previously been deemed unviable. She emphasized that seniors want a clear location, timeline, and plan, citing concerns about rising taxes, the availability of nearly \$60 million in the general fund, and increased costs caused by years of inaction. Ms. Daro stressed that placing senior services on multiple floors at the Hawk would fragment the community and discourage participation, particularly among the oldest residents. She urged the development of a new, one-story facility to replace the failing Costick Center.

Pat Hansen, City of Farmington, asked City Council to use a portion of the nearly \$60 million in unassigned city funds for a new senior center. She spoke against moving the senior center to the HAWK, noting that it had been proposed to put senior activities on the second and third floors, while having the gym and pool in new construction on the opposite side of the building.

Nancy Coumoundourus noted that the City had recently been recognized in *Architectural Digest* as one of the top 25 U.S. cities for arts programs. While comparisons to other communities were discussed during the study session, the City should be cautious when making such comparisons with municipalities who do not match the exceptional services offered in Farmington Hills. She commended Council members for affirming their commitment not to outsource services, emphasizing that contracting with outside providers often reduces quality and prioritizes profit over community benefit. She highlighted the decades of experience among current staff, whose contributions in both cultural arts and recreation deserve respect and recognition. Ms. Coumoundourus encouraged Council to continue asking questions as the study progresses and thanked them for their ongoing support of special services.

Kimberly Gerns, owner of In the Mitten Productions which operates the Farmington Hills' youth theater, spoke about the unique value of the City's Special Services staff, who are deeply invested in the community and in understanding their participants—something that cannot be replicated through outsourcing. She warned that contracting out services would undermine the quality of the programs, which sets Farmington Hills apart from other communities. Ms. Gerns also noted that the City's cultural and youth theater programs are of professional caliber, and she urged the City to increase marketing and promotional efforts so that more residents are aware of the high-quality programs already in place.

Pea Gee, resident, commended staff at the Hawk facility for their strong customer service but expressed disappointment with her reception at the Costick Center, where she felt unwelcome. She noted that the City's programming does not currently include activities such as chess or card games like Bid Whist, which has led residents to seek such opportunities in neighboring communities. She emphasized that attracting diverse participants requires openness to new types of programming and cultural inclusivity.

Worley Ortiz, resident and seven-year Meals on Wheels volunteer, emphasized the vital role the program plays by providing not only a hot meal but also a meaningful wellness check for recipients. She also highlighted the positive impact of the SENEX program on her mother.

James Aren, City of Farmington, cautioned against privatizing special services, noting that it often leads to higher long-term costs, reduced performance, and frequent staff turnover.

Angie Smith, resident, spoke about the value of the Costick Center as place for building friendships, community, and mental well-being. She also raised concerns about the condition of the facility. Ms. Smith urged the City to maintain the Costick Center so that seniors can continue to gather there.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Rich addressed an email that questioned why certain comments made to City Council were allowed at the last meeting. She explained that the comments were protected by the First Amendment.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, to approve the consent agenda as read by Mayor Pro Tem Dwyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no consent agenda items for discussion.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Aldred acknowledged the public's concerns regarding the Costick Center and emphasized Council's understanding of the community's desire for a single-floor facility and the preservation of essential services such as Meals on Wheels. He clarified that no services will be discontinued before an appropriate alternative is identified. Council is continuing to evaluate options, including the HAWK and other potential sites, while considering important factors such as accessibility and parking. The concerns expressed by residents are being heard and Council remains committed to exploring solutions that meet the community's needs.

Mayor Rich:

- Announced that Architectural Digest had designated Farmington Hills as one of the top 25 places to live in the US in 2025, highlighting its work in cultural arts and recreation.
- Shared her experience and recommended the Cycling for Active Adults group for folks 50+.
- The Gateway project at 696 and Orchard Lake Road is underway.

CITY MANAGER UPDATE

- The Annual Farmington Hills Open House will be held at City Hall on Saturday, October 4, from 12:00pm-3:00pm.
- The Bagels & Business event will be held at the HAWK on October 22, from 10:00am-12:30pm for vendors who would like to become City contractors.
- City Manager Mekjian acknowledged the complexity of the ongoing special services financial analysis, noting that while the analysis has been challenging, the study is providing greater clarity on how to move forward. He emphasized that both Council and administration share the same goal: creating a state-of-the-art facility that meets community needs while remaining fiscally responsible.

He affirmed that staff's role is to provide Council with the best possible information to guide decision-making. He thanked the public for their patience as the work continues.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION OF ENACTMENT OF ORDINANCE C-6-2025, TO AMEND THE FARMINGTON HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 34, "ZONING," ARTICLE 5.0, "SITE STANDARDS," TO ADD A NEW SECTION 34-5.20, "DESIGN STANDARDS" IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS REGARDING BUILDING MATERIALS, ARCHITECTURAL SCALING, AND ROOFING, WINDOW, AND BUILDING ENTRANCE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND FOR CERTAIN EXPANSIONS, ADDITIONS, AND CHANGES IN USE; AND SUMMARY FOR PUBLICATION.

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult, explained that this is the second reading for Zoning Text Amendment 5, which provides design standards for non-residential buildings. This item was before Council on September 8 with a public hearing and first reading. If approved this evening for enactment, the Text Amendment will go into effect in 21 days.

MOTION by Knol, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the ENACTMENT of Ordinance C-6-2025, to amend the Farmington Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 34, "Zoning," Article 5.0, "Site Standards," to add a new Section 34-5.20, "Design Standards" in order to establish standards regarding building materials, architectural scaling, and roofing, window, and building entrance design requirements for new construction and for certain expansions, additions, and changes in use; and summary for publication.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT 2, 2021 AGREEMENT FOR VILLAS AT PEBBLE CREEK (SARAH FISHER) INCLUDING REVISED SITE PLAN 59-5-2022. CMR 9-25-128

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult introduced this proposed PUD agreement. The plan and layout for the site had been revised, and the agreement was recommended by staff and the city attorney for Council's comment and approval this evening. This is the final step in the PUD process involving planning commission and city council. After this, the applicant will move on to construction drawings and construction for the site.

MOTION by Dwyer, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the Planned Unit Development 2, 2021 agreement for Villas at Pebble Creek (Sarah Fisher), including revised Site Plan 59-5-2022;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Manager be authorized to sign the agreement.

Motion discussion:

In response to a question from Councilmember Adred, Tim Loughrin, Robertson Homes, said that if

approved this evening, the applicants will complete the application before the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and return with that application to City Council, hopefully by the end of October. Once the Brownfield Plan is approved, they will close on the property and begin demolition. The plan is to complete demolition over the winter, and begin with utility construction in spring 2026, in conjunction with the completion of the Sarah Fisher Pump Station. If this timeline goes as planned, paving will be complete in summer 2026, and construction will then begin on new homes.

Councilmember Bruce expressed enthusiasm for this project, which will bring development to a long-vacant property in the City.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF FIREWORKS DISPLAY FOR THE USA 250TH CELEBRATION TO AMERICAN FIREWORKS COMPANY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$50,000. CMR 9-25-129

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order to American Fireworks Company for the June 25, 2026, celebration for \$50,000. American Fireworks Company also hold the status of a disabled vendor.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE BIDDESTONE SUBDIVISION CULVERTS REPLACEMENT PROJECT TO MILLER LS BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,303,364.83. CMR 9-25-130

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the Biddestone Culvert Replacement Project be awarded to the lowest competent bidder, Miller LS Bridge Construction of Portland, Michigan, in the amount of \$1,303,364.83, and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Manager and the City Clerk be authorized to execute the contract on behalf of the City.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF AGREEMENT FOR SPICER STABLES ROOF REPLACEMENT TO STERLING CONSTRUCTION & ROOFING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$44,565.48. CMR 9-25-131

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for the Spicer Stables roof replacement to Sterling Construction & Roofing in the amount of \$44,565.48 (\$29,565.48 plus a substantial contingency cost of \$15,000 for unforeseen and anticipated cost due to the age of the building for replacement). Sterling Construction is categorized as a minority owned company.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF A REQUEST FOR STATUS CHANGE UNDER SECTION 10.01A OF THE CITY CHARTER FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. CMR 9-25-132

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the status change of Officer Lavin and Meyer, pursuant to the City Charter, Article X, Section 10.01A.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR THE NORTH FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL HOMECOMING PARADE TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2025.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves a Special Event Permit for the North Farmington High School Homecoming Parade to be held on September 26, 2025, from 6:00pm to 6:50pm, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- The parade will begin at Forest Elementary and proceed through the subdivision
- Once the parade reaches Walnut Lane and Farmington Road, it will pause briefly until all participants have reached Farmington Road. Farmington Road will be closed just north of Walnut Lane and just north of 13 Mile Road
- The applicant has requested six police officers to help with the road closure and has requested this be done via an overtime posting that will be paid for by the school

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRIDGES
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2025.

MOTION by Bruce support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the City Council study session minutes of September 8, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: BRIDGES

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2025.

MOTION by Bruce support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the regular session minutes of September 8, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: BRIDGES

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Pea Gee, resident, addressed negative campaigning, and stressed the importance of candidates following campaign rules.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular session of City Council meeting adjourned at 6:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk