

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2022 – 7:30 PM

The regular session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Barnett at 7:39pm.

Council Members Present: Barnett, Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Massey, and Newlin

Council Members Absent: Boleware

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Valentine, Directors Randle, Schnackel and Skrobola, Police Chief King, Fire Chief Unruh and City Attorney Joppich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

County Commissioner Gershenson led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA

MOTION by Massey, support by Bridges, to approve the agenda as published.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received or acknowledged.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, to approve consent agenda items #4 through #11 as read.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN

Nays: NONE

Absent: BOLEWARE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

MOTION by Knol, support by Massey, to approve consent agenda items #12 and #13 as read.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN

Nays: NONE

Absent: BOLEWARE

Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 5-0-1-1.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

County Commissioner Gershenson provided the following County update:

- Treasury guidelines have been released with regard to American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding
- There are vacancies on several County boards including the Retirement and Deferred Compensation Board and Community Mental Health Board
- Thank you to Assistant City Manager Joe Valentine for his efforts with regard to continued discussion on the deer population issue
- The County has partnered with Gleaners to provide food for residents needing to supplement their groceries and pick-up will be the 2nd Wednesday of every month starting Wednesday, January 12, 2022

COUNCIL MEMBERS COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following council member comments and announcements were made:

- Request to consider donations to CARES, a local charity in need of continued funding

CITY MANAGER UPDATE

City Manager Mekjian made the following comments:

- A city donation of \$3,700 was made to CARES that was raised through employee casual days
- American Red Cross will host a blood drive on January 12th from 8am-8pm at Costick Center
- Martin Luther King event will be held at the Library on January 17th at 11am
- City Offices will be closed on January 17th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, there will be no delay in garbage pickup
- Winter Tax Bills are due through February 14th

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF REVISED GUIDELINES FOR POVERTY EXEMPTION AND DEFERRED SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS.

Matt Dingman, City Assessor, explained that the revised guidelines for poverty exemption were necessitated by amendments to PA 253 of 2020 and the changes included:

- Removal of language allowing for the Board of Review to deviate from the established guidelines based on substantial and compelling reasons
- Adding requirements that the exemption must be 100% of taxable value, 50% of taxable value or 25% of taxable value

Mr. Dingman noted that the amendments before Council replaced income-based ranges from the adopted guidelines from 2018 with taxable value ranges per the change in the act. In response to Council, he confirmed that the changes were to simplify the process and make it standard state-wide.

MOTION by Knol, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby adopts and approves the revised “Guidelines and Application for Special Assessment Deferment,” dated January 10, 22 and authorizes the City Assessor to annually update and revise the “Household Income” amounts in order to maintain the same percentage difference between the City’s household income amounts and the federal poverty standards as adjusted annually by the federal government.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Mr. Dingman explained the deferred special assessment guidelines are similar to the poverty exemption guidelines in that if someone cannot pay based on their income, the assessment could be deferred. Residents used to have to apply to the State Department of Treasury first and be denied before they could request deferment at the local level but the Department of Treasury has recently ended their program for

deferring special assessments so it defaults back to the local level. Mr. Dingman noted that the city has guidelines in place but they have not been updated since 2016. The changes proposed include:

- Removing the language requiring a prior denial from the Department of Treasury
- Updating the average assessed value of a home
- Updating the income guidelines to correlate with the poverty exemption guidelines

He added that each year the assessing office would update the income guidelines once that information is received.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Newlin, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby adopts and approves the revised Board of Review “Guidelines for Poverty Exemption Review,” dated January 10, 2022, for use in compliance with Public Act 390 of 1994 and Public Act 53 of 2020, and authorizes the Board of Review, on Council’s behalf, to annually update and revise the “Household Income” amounts stated in Section IV of the Guidelines in order to maintain the same percentage difference between the City’s Household Income amounts and the federal poverty standards as adjusted annually by the federal government.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FARMINGTON HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 2, “ADMINISTRATION,” ARTICLE V, “EMPLOYEE BENEFITS,” TO AMEND SECTION 2-360 TO ADD A NEW SUBSECTION RELATING TO REEMPLOYMENT OF COURT EMPLOYEES. CMR 1-22-01

Tom Skrobola, Finance Director, explained that it was brought the attention of the city by the new Court Administrator, Stacy Parke, that her employee group was the only group not covered under this ordinance provision for rehire. The request to include the court employees was reviewed by the retirement system attorney and city attorney and it was determined it was appropriate to extend this provision to the employees of the 47th District Court. It would have no further financial impact on the city.

Mayor Barnett clarified and Director Skrobola confirmed that this amendment would allow for the rehiring of retired court employees based on a need for experienced staff that could be rehired according to IRS and ordinance guidelines.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Bridges, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the INTRODUCTION of an Ordinance amending the Farmington Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, “Administration,” Article V, “Employee Benefits,” to amend Section 2-360 to add a new subsection relating to reemployment of court employees.

Roll Call Vote:

- Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF BID FOR GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT TO REVELS TURF & TRACTOR IN THE AMOUNT OF \$20,831.80, TO SPARTAN DISTRIBUTORS, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$31,046.31, AND TO MIDWEST GOLF AND TURF IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,444.67. CMR 1-22-02

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order for a John Deere 1200 Hydro Bunker Rake from Revels Turf & Tractor in the amount of \$20,831.80, a Toro ProCore SR70-S from Spartan Distributors, Inc. in the amount of \$31,046.31, and a Club Car Carryall 502 from Midwest Golf and Turf in the amount of \$9,444.67.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE QUAKER VALLEY SUBDIVISION WATER MAIN EXTENSION AND THE SALVADOR AVENUE BETWEEN WHITLOCK STREET AND HUGO AVENUE WATER MAIN AND SANITARY SEWER EXTENSION PROJECT TO BRICCO EXCAVATING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,456,369.00. CMR 1-22-03

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the award of Quaker Valley Subdivision Water Main Extension and the Salvador Avenue between Whitlock Street and Hugo Avenue Water Main and Sanitary Sewer Extension Project to the lowest competent bidder, Bricco Excavating of Oak Park, Michigan, in the amount of \$1,456,369.00; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council authorizes the City Manager and the City Clerk to execute the contract on behalf of the City.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF PROPOSAL FOR EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM TO MTM RECOGNITION IN AN ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF \$15,000 FOR THREE YEARS; WITH POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS. CMR 1-22-04

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to approve a contract and issue Purchase Orders to MTM Recognition for the Employee Recognition Program in an estimated amount of \$15,000 for three (3) years and for three (3) additional one-year terms under the same terms and conditions by mutual consent between the City of Farmington Hills and MTM Recognition.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF BID FOR MAKERSPACE WOODSHOP DUST AND WOODCHIP COLLECTION SYSTEM TO MADISON STREET HOLDINGS DBA AGET MANUFACTURING IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$70,257.00. CMR 1-22-05

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to sign an agreement and issue a purchase order for the Makerspace Woodshop Dust and Woodchip Collection System project to Madison Street Holdings DBA AGET Manufacturing in an amount not to exceed \$70,257 (\$63,870 + 6,387 contingency).

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF STRYKER POWER LOAD STRETCHER SYSTEM AND RELATED EQUIPMENT WITH STRYKER MEDICAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$108,485.40. CMR 1-22-06

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby waives the sealed bid process & authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order to Stryker Medical in the amount of \$108,485.40 to purchase the Power Load Stretcher Systems & related equipment.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 10.01A OF THE CITY CHARTER FOR THE POSITION OF BUILDING ASSISTANT.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the request for employment under Section 10.01A of the City Charter for Alexander Smith as a Building Assistant in the Special Services Department. Alexander is the son of Debbie Smith, who is a Senior Adult Programmer in the Special Services Department.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE

Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 10.01A OF THE CITY CHARTER FOR THE POSITION OF HAWK BUILDING ATTENDANT.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the request for employment under Section 10.01A of the City Charter for Tristen Hoke as a Hawk Building Attendant in the Special Services Department. Tristen is the son of Robyn Hoke, who is a Concessions Programmer in the Special Services Department.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 10.01A OF THE CITY CHARTER FOR THE POSITION OF SWIM INSTRUCTOR.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the request for employment under Section 10.01A of the City Charter for Faith Keyes as a Swim Instructor in the Special Services Department. Faith is the sister of Abigail Keyes, who is an Aquatics Coordinator in the Special Services Department.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2021.

MOTION by Knol, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the City Council study session meeting minutes of December 13, 2021.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 5-0-1-1.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MEETING
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2021.**

MOTION by Knol, support by Massey, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the City Council regular session meeting minutes of December 13, 2021.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 5-0-1-1.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

ATTORNEY REPORT

The attorney report was received by Council.

CLOSED SESSION

CONSIDERATION OF ENTERING INTO A CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION REGARDING DWANE ROBINSON V CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS, ET AL, U.S. DISTRICT COURT CASE NO. 2:21-CV-10150-SFC-CI. (NOTE: COUNCIL WILL RETURN TO OPEN SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CLOSED SESSION TO TAKE ACTION IF NEEDED AND TO CLOSE THE MEETING).

Mayor Barnett announced that City Council will return to open session immediately following the closed session to take action if needed and to close the regular meeting.

MOTION by Massey, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves entering into a closed session to discuss pending litigation regarding Dwane Robinson v City of Farmington Hills, et al, U.S. District Court Case No. 2:21-cv-10150-SFC-CI.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: BARNETT, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, MASSEY, AND NEWLIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: BOLEWARE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Council entered back into regular session immediately following the closed session at 8:46pm.

MOTION by Massey, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves and authorizes the City Manager and City's attorney to proceed as recommended by the attorney in closed session with respect to the case of *Dwane Robinson vs. City of Farmington Hills*.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular session City Council meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk