

CITY OF FARMINGTON  
STUDY SESSION

A study session of the Farmington City Council was held on Tuesday, January 20, 2004 in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bush, Campbell, Knol, McShane, Mitchell.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, Director Gushman, City Manager Pastue.

Mayor Campbell opened the meeting requesting City Manager Pastue address the first agenda item concerning the 2004 Sidewalk Program. Pastue stated that as a result of a recent inspection of City sidewalks on the north side of Grand River, it was estimated that repairs would be approximately \$100,000 over budget, for a total cost of \$250,000. Pastue advised that the company, contracted by Farmington Hills for sidewalk repair last year, has agreed to extend the same unit pricing to Farmington this year. Pastue further advised that the contractor, Hard Rock Construction, has a reputation for quality work and maintaining good relationships with residents.

Pastue reviewed the three options available for meeting the budget deficit on the sidewalk repair: one, transfer \$100,000 from the capital improvement fund, where funds are available that have not been earmarked for a specific capital improvement project; two, request that a second inspection of the sidewalks be made to determine how repairs could be scaled back to meet budget; or three, divide the work over two fiscal years. Pastue recommended the first option of using capital improvement funds.

Mayor Campbell discussed the past difficulties of using special assessments to fund sidewalk repair. He further stated that sidewalks in disrepair are always a liability for the City. Director Gushman spoke about sidewalk maintenance under the former special assessment program, where in some instances, short rather than long term repairs were made due to limited funds. He stated that the proposed sidewalk repair program would save the City money in the long run. Responding to a question, Director Gushman described the repair method that would be used to provide a longer term solution to the problem of tree roots. He noted that the vast majority of sidewalk repairs were due to tree roots.

Councilmember McShane asked about consequences of making repairs over a two-year period. Pastue responded that in order to meet budget, one-third of the sidewalk

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repairs would need to be set aside. Mayor Campbell noted an additional consequence of waiting might be higher repair costs. Pastue suggested that half of the work could be done in the spring of this fiscal year and the other half in the fall of next fiscal year, allowing all the work to be done in this calendar year. He noted, however, that even with splitting the work the budget deficit would be about \$60,000. With regard to the proposed contractor, Director Gushman noted that the unit pricing is very competitive because it is based on Farmington Hill's volume and last year's rate.

Councilmember Knol asked if it would be more budget-efficient to divide the City in quadrants in scheduling sidewalk repairs in order to further spread out the costs. Gushman responded that since price is related to volume, costs would increase if the project size were reduced.

Councilmember Bush also expressed her concern regarding the City's liability with regard to sidewalks in disrepair and stated her support for using capital improvement funds to complete the project.

Councilmember Mitchell expressed support in splitting the work between two fiscal years, but completing it in a calendar year. Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell noted that any use of funds for the current project would reduce funds for the next sidewalk repair program. Discussion continued regarding the condition of the sidewalks north of Grand River and ongoing maintenance throughout the City.

Councilmember Knol asked if sidewalk repairs recently completed on the south side of Grand River were sufficient enough so that costs for the next round of repairs, scheduled in five years, would be less and stay within the budget. Director Gushman responded that he hoped the costs would be contained, but unexpected repairs could always occur.

Council concurred to move forward with full sidewalk repairs at a cost of \$250,000 and directed administration to budget \$100,000 from the Capital Improvement Fund to fund the Program. Discussion followed regarding contractors for the sidewalk repair program. Gushman stated that Hard Rock Concrete has agreed to perform the work at the lowest bid price received by Farmington Hills for their sidewalk program last year.

Council indicated support for the City Manager to go forward with the City of Farmington Hills' contractor, Hard Rock Concrete, for the sidewalk repair program and their willingness to consider waiving the bid process.

Pastue addressed the next agenda item concerning the Commission on the Environment. In addressing changes to the Commission, he recommended keeping the Awards Program with assistance provided by the City Manager's office and transferring other responsibilities, such as the Remembrance Tree Program, to Director Gushman

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and Commission member Marianne Hellibuyck. In examining the reasons for reducing the Commission's responsibilities, Pastue noted that many of its members are also serving on Main Street Committees where they would like to focus their time and energy. He discussed the possibility of members working on special projects, as needed, rather than serving on an appointed commission. He advised that the Commission is not successful as it is currently structured.

Discussion followed regarding ways in which some of the responsibilities of the Commission could be included in other committees or as special projects. Council noted that some of the responsibilities of the Commission were incorporated in the Main Street Design Committee.

Discussion continued regarding structure and membership of an awards program. Council discussed keeping the awards committee from the previous year active for this year, on an ad hoc basis, if members are available to serve and treating the Commission on the Environment as inactive. Responding to a question, Pastue suggested offering current members on the Commission a position on the awards committee.

**01-04-002** Motion by Mitchell, seconded by Bush, to enter into a closed session, at the request of administration, for the purpose of discussions regarding POAM collective bargaining negotiations.

**ROLL CALL**

Ayes: Bush, Campbell, Knol, McShane, Mitchell.

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council entered into closed session at 7:40 p.m.

**01-04-003** Motion by Bush, seconded by Mitchell, to adjourn the closed session.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

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ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor

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PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer

