

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Tuesday, July 13, 2004, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Campbell.

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

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

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

Mayor Campbell opened the meeting with comments regarding the role of the city manager; suggested council members meet with the manager regarding their concerns and that the manager then incorporate individual council member concerns into the overall list of priorities; that the council goals and objectives be used as a guideline by the manager; noted that the community is consistent from year to year in its goals; that it is important for the council to advise the manager of council priorities and that it is important for council members to realize that issues should be depersonalized.

At the Mayor's invitation, Manager Pastue discussed his approach to management and budgeting. He noted issues that he has addressed and expressed optimism regarding the master plan and the direction of downtown development. He recognized the number of goals and objectives that need to be addressed and the need to increase communication with Council.

Councilmember McShane discussed the process established at the 2004 goal setting session and the need for follow-through. McShane stated her concurrence with the Ohren report resulting from the goal-setting session.

Councilmember Knol agreed that the 2004 goals and objectives were appropriate to use as a framework, but that more detailed discussion regarding them is needed.

City Manager Pastue led the discussion regarding the 2004 Goals and Objectives.

**1. GOAL: Maintain public facilities and infrastructure in good condition and in an aesthetically pleasing manner, encourage appropriate use of public facilities, and plan for future facility and infrastructure needs in the City.**

**Objective 1-A:** Continue to maintain and improve public facilities and infrastructure and plan for development and financing of future facilities and infrastructure to accommodate changing needs, including specifically the update of the city's recreation plan and the water reliability study.

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Pastue suggested a target completion date of December 31, 2004 for the recreation plan in order to be eligible to submit a grant in April 2005.

McShane asked regarding whom in the City is designated to pursue grants available to the City. Pastue responded that it could be a general grant writer or someone from staff, depending on the project.

Pastue discussed the cost and financing of the proposed Downtown Master Plan. He discussed financing through special assessments and bond issues. He suggested that the City would cover the expense of a municipal street, water and sewer, and a municipal park, while the DDA would cover a parking structure and streetscape improvements that would involve applying for grants. He noted that aspects of the Plan could be included as part of the Recreation Plan.

McShane noted that fundraising should be included as part of the financing plan.

Knol expressed concern that the new plan for the pavilion does not include a farmer's market. She stated that the City needs to be influential in ensuring promises regarding the farmer's market are kept. She expressed concern that the lack of movement on the pavilion would cause those involved to lose faith.

Pastue stated that Brent Morgan, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), is currently arranging meetings in order to follow through on the project; that the architect may need to revise the latest plan for the pavilion.

Knol discussed a pavilion in the City of Plymouth, noting the design and use. She stated that the pavilion project needs to move forward with the original plan and expansion could occur during phase II.

McShane concurred with moving forward on the original pavilion plan due to commitments that have been made.

Discussion continued regarding the cost and the reasons for the latest pavilion plan. Pastue acknowledged that a farmer's market was originally promised as part of the construction of a pavilion. He stated that the pavilion plans were revised to coincide with the goals of the master plan.

Mayor Campbell asked if the DDA was aware that a band shell was included in the latest plans for the pavilion. Pastue stated that the original pavilion plan was still doable.

Councilmember Mitchell stated that the new plan was revised to be multi-functional, as part of the planned park in the downtown. He noted that the Plymouth pavilion is not located in a park and is not appropriate for other uses. He stated that Farmington has a

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unique opportunity to have a park in the downtown with a pavilion that is multi-functional. He suggested that the City participate in the cost of the project.

Pastue noted that the farmer's market has been successful and the pavilion, as originally planned, would move forward.

McShane stated that it is important that construction of the pavilion begin as soon as possible and to publicize its progress.

Pastue recommended completion dates for the following: recreation plan - December 31, 2004; water reliability study - March 31, 2005; and the downtown financing plan - September 30, 2004.

Campbell questioned if deadlines need to be revised in order to address the immediate goal of the pavilion construction. Pastue responded that the water reliability study could be delayed.

Knol noted the importance of the recreation plan because it ties into funding of the downtown plan.

Discussion continued regarding the components of a recreation plan. McShane suggested including representatives from the Farmington Public Schools and the City of Farmington Hills on the recreation plan committee.

**Objective 1-B:** Continue to actively pursue public policy issues (i.e., right-of-way control) related to infrastructure components not under City control, such as, public utilities and telecommunication technologies.

Pastue will continue to monitor changes as they arise.

**Objective 1-C:** Conduct a parking-needs assessment to determine adequacy of existing parking, to anticipate future needs, and to identify potential strategies for meeting those future needs.

Pastue discussed parking deficiencies in the downtown. He stated that the primary problem was the parking behind the theatre. He advised that based on a previous parking study, the downtown has ample parking, but not necessarily in the right locations.

McShane asked about the City's response to the recommendation provided by the Traffic and Safety Board. Pastue stated that he would ask the Board to address specific issues.

McShane referenced the Traffic and Safety Board recommendations and asked if the

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parking issue would be put on the next Council agenda. Pastue responded that he would speak to the Traffic and Safety Board at their next meeting regarding the broader issues. McShane expressed the need to be proactive on the parking and traffic issues.

Mitchell questioned the wisdom of addressing only part of the parking issue now rather than looking for a long-term solution for the downtown area. McShane responded that the recommendation by the Traffic and Safety Board is a needed short-term fix, providing temporary relief.

Knol stated that redistributing parking on the south side of Grand River would not fix the problem on the north side. She further stated that the City has a responsibility to address the north side parking problems, especially given the fact that many of the parking spaces are taken by Civic Theatre customers.

Campbell stated that if the parking could be reconfigured all at once it would be more effective. He stated that in phase one of the downtown renovations, the existing lot could be reconfigured, except for those spaces permanently assigned, and a sign posted that directs traffic overflow to the Training Center parking lot.

Knol expressed concern that the City has not met with businesses on the Master Plan. McShane suggested that Bob DeCorte, Traffic Engineer and member of the Traffic and Safety Board, would be very effective in making a presentation to the business owners. She recommended placing the parking issue on the agenda and inviting the Traffic and Safety Board to make a presentation.

Responding to a question, Pastue confirmed that he had met with a couple of the business owners concerning parking. He stated that he is amenable to meeting with the north side businesses and reviewing the master plan with them.

McShane again stressed the importance of placing this issue on an upcoming meeting agenda. Discussion followed as to whether this issue should be addressed during a regular meeting or study session. Mitchell recommended a study session due to the number of questions still unanswered. McShane stated her preference for a regular meeting to allow public comment and media coverage.

Mitchell stated that it was his understanding that the City would need consent from private property owners to make a change to parking. He further stated that it would be difficult for Council to take any action until after meeting with the Traffic and Safety Board and business owners. He stated that in his opinion, the City Manager, the Public Safety Director and the Traffic and Safety Board should recommend solutions.

Pastue advised that the business owners do not have a parking problem, therefore they do not have an incentive to make any changes. He stated that the temporary plan could be presented to the owners as an interim solution until a more permanent solution

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can be implemented under the master plan.

Knol stated her support for the interim plan presented by the Traffic and Safety Board, at least until a parking structure can be built. She reiterated the need to meet with the business owners to show them how the master plan will benefit everyone.

Campbell suggested meeting again with the Traffic and Safety Board during which time a joint meeting could be developed, bringing together Council, business owners, DDA, and the Board.

McShane suggested that the City should look at how it presents plans and the need to use the most effective presenters.

- Objective 1-D:**      Develop a work plan including analysis and recommendations to address several related issues regarding continuing preservation and improvement of the Governor Warner Mansion's collection, buildings, and facilities, including:
- Refining and rethinking the purpose of the facility;
  - Clarifying current costs of operation;
  - Increasing public awareness and use of the facility;
  - Securing additional external funding for the facility; and
  - Improving reporting on use and financing to City Council.

Council discussed funding and operation of the Governor Warner Mansion. Mayor Campbell advised that fundraising would need to be done by a separate committee. McShane expressed an interest in knowing the number of visitors to the Mansion and the organizations, if any, they represent. Campbell stated that he believes the purpose of the Mansion is to maintain the history and legacy of Governor Warner. He further commented that museum staff is doing a good job of serving this purpose.

Discussion continued regarding the purpose of the museum, whether displays should only include artifacts from Governor Warner and the Victorian time period or expanded to include other areas of Farmington history. Discussion continued on various options for displays and whether or not the facility should be rented out for events.

Mitchell suggested that the carriage house could be used for other activities, however the Mansion could not sustain heavy traffic. Mitchell felt that fundraising would have to be under a separate committee appointed by Council. He recognized the excellent job Director Horvath is doing in preserving the current collections.

Knol spoke about the need to find ways in which more people could be brought to the Mansion. McShane asked if Knol was looking for a more interactive facility.

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Campbell commented that the Mansion was not meant to be a historical museum, but a preservation of Governor Warner artifacts and a reflection of that time period.

Pastue noted that the Mansion is a high maintenance item; that increased use would increase the maintenance requirements.

Knol stated that a cost analysis of the Mansion should be completed and then communicated to the community. Campbell asked about the designation of the donation of the Mansion to the City.

McShane stated that to have a museum with a limited number of visitors does not make a lot of sense. She stated that alternatives should be developed to raise funds to offset the City's costs.

Mitchell confirmed that fundraising for the Mansion is the City's responsibility, not that of the Museum Director. He suggested that Council establish a committee. Knol stated that Council must first clarify the purpose of the Mansion before developing a fundraising committee; and that Council would need to be part of that committee. Bush recommended a review of the gifting stipulations for the Mansion before proceeding.

Discussion continued on how to proceed with funding and operation of the Mansion.

Mitchell stated that he feels that the Mansion is not as high a priority as other issues facing the City; that the Mansion is well-preserved and fundraising is the only open issue.

Knol asked if the City could include a survey in the next City newsletter asking residents their opinion on the purpose and use of the Mansion. After discussion on the timing of the next newsletter, Mitchell suggested including as an insert in the next water bill. Pastue noted that the next water billing is scheduled for September.

McShane noted a survey that was done by the prior Mansion Committee.

Bush stated her opinion that the Mansion needs to be self-sufficient; that increased use of the facility is desirable; and that she is not ready to put this issue at the bottom of the priority list.

McShane emphasized the need for a work plan and suggested involving the Historical Commission.

Pastue stated that information would be provided on Mansion funding and operations at the next council meeting.

Pastue and Knol agreed that there is a need to clarify the purpose of the Mansion; and

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that Council needs to participate in that decision.

McShane suggested charging fees for use of the Mansion grounds.

**Objective 1-E:** Consider the feasibility, cost and likely payback of hiring or contracting for the services of a grant-writer to more effectively pursue external funding sources to support facilities and infrastructure improvements.

Pastue discussed the various areas in which a grant-writer would be useful. He cautioned that some communities become overwhelmed with writing grants, including pursuing grants that only provide marginal benefit.

Campbell agreed that it is important to be selective about projects for which grants are written. Mitchell noted that grant applications are not always successful and hiring grant-writers may not be a prudent use of funds. Pastue suggested hiring grant-writers for the more technical projects.

McShane asked about locating grants and where to find “expertise” in applying for them. Discussion continued regarding grant seeking.

Campbell suggested that Administration is responsible for knowing what grants are available and should use its discretion in determining which grants to apply for. He suggested that City Manager Pastue report from time to time on grants for which the City has applied. Pastue indicated that he would review the availability of foundation grants. Knol stated that in the past, the museum did not qualify for some grants due to insufficient hours of operation, noting that greater use of the Mansion could result in more grant opportunities. She suggested using college interns for grant writing.

COUNCIL TOOK A SHORT BREAK.

**Objective 1-F:** Continue efforts to enhance utilization of the Civic Theatre by:

- Supporting the newly appointed Civic Theatre Committee;
- Continuing to identify additional uses, new marketing promotions, and new users/ Patrons;
- Developing and presenting new events/programs during the year; and
- Generating revenue for additional equipment and to upgrade facilities.

McShane asked that the Civic Theatre Committee provide Council with an update on its activities. Pastue also suggested an update on the Farmington Funny Film Festival activities. Knol agreed to relay the request for an update to the Committee and Pastue will schedule a report to Council.

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**2. Goal: Support community planning initiatives and programs for community maintenance and encourage aesthetic improvements to insure the highest quality of life in the community.**

**Objective 2-A:** Monitor the physical condition of properties throughout the community and encourage appropriate development or redevelopment.

Pastue indicated that he would provide a date for the “city drive-through” at the next council meeting.

**Objective 2-B:** Continue to support implementation of the Master Plan and continued vigorous code and zoning enforcement in conformance with the new zoning code.

Pastue advised that the Planning Commission has expressed support for a two-step process in reviewing proposed plans. He further advised that he is looking at establishing escrow accounts to cover fees for consultants’ review of PUD’s, special land use and rezoning plans. He discussed the addition of overlay districts as part of the redevelopment process.

McShane stated that the City needs regular, vigorous code and zoning enforcement. Pastue noted that from time to time there is a workload issue. McShane noted businesses with “25% window coverage” violations. Discussion continued regarding code issues on Mooney Street and other areas around the City, including the Uptown Plaza.

Knol asked for an update on the progress of the sign ordinance. Pastue advised that he would follow-up after the Founder’s Festival. He noted that this task may be reassigned to a different Main Street Committee. He stated that the City is looking for recommendations, not a rewrite of the current ordinance. Knol recommended making the revision of the sign ordinance a priority. Pastue stated that he feels a committee can finish this in a couple of months. Pastue stated that he would like to involve the DDA in educating new businesses on the sign ordinance and other applicable codes.

McShane advised that the Main Street Design Committee is asking about progress on the sign ordinance revisions and suggested setting up dates to finish the project.

**Objective 2-C:** Continue ongoing dialogue with commercial property owners, managers and tenants in the community to maintain open lines of communication and to anticipate potential needs.

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Manager Pastue advised of successful meetings that have been held with various business property owners. Bush asked about the status of the former Motorrama building. Pastue responded that he has not yet met with the owner of that property. McShane asked why so many buildings owned by Standard Construction remain vacant. Pastue stated that with some of the street improvements, Administration is ready to have a dialogue with some of the property owners. He cited some maintenance agreements that need to be addressed.

Discussion continued regarding properties owned by Standard Construction. It was suggested that sharing specifics of the master plan might encourage and/or guide infill development. Mitchell suggested talking with the owners of the World Wide Shopping Center to determine future plans for updates of the center.

**Objective 2-D:** Conduct an annual tour of the City to review the effectiveness of maintenance and enforcement activities.

Pastue stated that a tour would be arranged for sometime in September 2004.

**Objective 2-E:** Continue to address environmental improvement related issues, including reforestation/tree replanting programs, brownfield reclamation, Rouge River cleanup, ash borer and west Nile problems, etc.

McShane noted that a number of trees in the community needed to be trimmed. Pastue stated that Edison should do as much of the trimming as possible. McShane cited the south side of Shiawassee between the two Farmington roads as an area in need of trimming. Pastue requested that council members notify him when they spot other areas of concern. Bush asked if Council should go through the manager or directly to department heads with problems. Pastue responded that either would be appropriate. Pastue expressed concern regarding Ash trees on private property.

McShane noted that the City had not participated in a "Rouge Clean Up" recently. Campbell advised that the City could participate if and when needed.

McShane recommended that during replantings, the City plant perennials that are more low maintenance and cost effective than annuals. Pastue noted the ongoing maintenance cost of perennials. Discussion continued regarding planting options.

**Objective 2-F:** Continue to support aesthetic enhancements, such as community beautification efforts and public art programs (i.e. art in the park).

Campbell noted the Council's commitment to continue the "Community Awards Program." Pastue advised that his office is currently working on the program.

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McShane spoke about the involvement in a baseline road art project in which an obelisk is created for placement in a central area, communicating the surveying and platting of the baseline road.

**Objective 2-G:** Monitor and participate as appropriate efforts related to the Farmington Community Foundation and Farmington-Farmington Hills Cultural Arts Master Plan.

Pastue discussed the Cultural Arts Master Plan and the City's future level of participation. Knol noted that the City contributes to the funding of the Cultural Arts Program but does not see the details of the budget. Pastue stated he would like to see a more formal agreement, defining the City's funding commitment and expectations. Bush asked if Farmington Hills had responded to his letter. Pastue stated that he spoke with City Manager Brock and there is still some disagreement on their part. He indicated that funding of the Library remains an outstanding issue.

Council concurred to amend the agenda to include the following motion:

**07-04-156** MOTION by Mitchell, seconded by Knol, to allow the City to apply for a liquor license for the first day of the Founders Festival, Thursday, July 15, 2004, in conjunction with the wine tent. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**07-04-157** MOTION by Knol, seconded by Mitchell, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

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ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor

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PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer