

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
December 21, 2009

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, December 21, 2009, 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 7:03 p.m. by Mayor Buck.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buck, Knol, McShane, Wiggins, Wright.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue, Treasurer Weber (arrived at 7:25 p.m.).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

12-09-246 MOTION by McShane, seconded by Wiggins, to approve the agenda as submitted. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

SWOCC ANNUAL REPORT

Present: Caren Collins, Director, Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC)

SWOCC Director Caren Collins presented the 2008-09 SWOCC annual report. She indicated the annual audit from Plante & Moran is not yet available. She provided an overview of the annual budget, noting revenues are down due to competition from the satellite dishes and AT&T. She advised the franchise and PEG fees from AT&T go directly to the participating cities. She stated as a result of reduced revenues they have budgeted more conservatively taking out several capital items.

Collins stated at the recommendation of the SWOCC Board an efficiency and operations study is currently underway. She advised the BARTEK Group was selected from 3 RFP's received to conduct the study.

Collins provided some highlights from the annual report. She noted they have separated the productions by categories reflecting how the needs and priorities of the communities are met. She further noted several non-profit and service-to-community productions.

Collins indicated in January SWOCC began providing video on demand service. She discussed the cost effectiveness of this service not only for SWOCC, but for the cities as well. She advised through the SWOCC website all government programming is available on the demand.

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Collins briefly discussed the breakdown of government spending and contributions of the three participating cities.

Collins discussed other sections of the annual report including: Farmington 15 News, Community Access programs, and commercial production.

McShane asked about the number of "Around Town Biz" productions in 2009. Collins responded that program has evolved into a new partnership with the DDA and Chamber to produce shows highlighting businesses.

Discussion followed regarding franchise fee contributions to SWOCC and percentage of government spending for each community. Discussion continued regarding number of total productions for each community and application of SWOCC bucks.

Knol asked why Farmington is charged for "The Better Living Series" since it is not produced by the City and does not appear to be a government show. Collins stated she would look into this.

Wright expressed concern regarding Channel 15 programming. He stated it appears other cities are committing more capital to their channel. He noted it is impossible for Farmington to have an equally effective station. He wondered if there is some other way to accomplish what Channel 15 is trying to achieve.

Pastue discussed the trend of cable companies to move government programming to obscure 900 channels. He stated part of the purpose of the efficiency and operations study is to determine how to use PEG money to continue with productions, but have them tie in with each of the cities' communication plans. He predicts a move toward a web-based, pod casting environment. Discussion followed regarding the advantages of on-demand programming.

Knol requested removal of the reading of the DETROIT FREE PRESS on Channel 15. Discussion followed regarding the ineffectiveness of the fixed "bulletin board" currently on that channel.

Discussion continued regarding public interest in local government channels and how Farmington compares. Discussion followed regarding the need for additional programming on Farmington's channel.

Wiggins inquired about taping other meetings such as DDA, Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Commission. Pastue responded the City's goal is to mount three cameras in the chambers to allow recording of additional meetings. He stated the City may have an opportunity to obtain equipment from Farmington Hills as a result of their reconstruction project.

OTHER BUSINESS

Corridor Improvement Authority

As a result of a recent grant received by the Land Information Access Association (LIAA), the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills will form a stakeholders group comprised of seven members to serve on the Corridor Improvement Authority. He advised the LIAA has requested that a representative from the corridor participate. He stated a meeting will be scheduled in mid-January.

SMART

Pastue indicated the issue of opting in or out of SMART will be on the January 4, 2010 meeting agenda.

Knol advised the City still needs to know how many of its taxpayers are riding SMART. She stated this is important information in making a decision.

Discussion followed regarding the significant impact Farmington Hills' decision concerning SMART will have on Farmington.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

COUNCIL COMMENT

Wright expressed concern regarding programming on Channel 15. He recommended running the programs that are available on a continual loop. He stated there should never be a blank screen on Channel 15.

Discussion followed regarding the likelihood of all government access channels moving to the 900 range.

ADJOURNMENT

12-09-247 MOTION by Knol, seconded by Wiggins, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Tom Buck, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: January 19, 2010