

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, February 26, 2007, 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 5:33 p.m. by Mayor McShane.

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, Assistant City Manager Richards, Attorney Schultz (arrived 5:45 p.m.).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

02-07-040 MOTION by Buck, seconded by Wiggins, to approve the agenda as amended, deleting Item No. 6 – Presentation – Proposal Regarding Video Streaming on City Website. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

INTERVIEW COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Council interviewed the following candidates to fill an unexpired term on City Council: David Wright and Dennis Mulqueen.

02-07-041 MOTION by Buck, seconded by Wiggins, to take a short recess. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council recessed the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and reconvened at 6:53 p.m.

CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor McShane proposed a nomination and appointment process. She stated the process would begin with open nominations whereby each Councilmember would have the opportunity to nominate a candidate. At the close of nominations, Council would discuss the merits of each nominated candidate. Mayor McShane advised during the voting process each Councilmember is allowed one vote for one of the nominated candidates and no support motion would be required. If no clear majority for a candidate is achieved, the nominating process would begin again. Mayor McShane advised during a second round, Councilmembers could each offer two nominations to widen the pool of nominees.

02-07-042 MOTION by Knol, seconded by Wiggins, to accept the nomination and voting process as described by Mayor McShane for the selection of a new City Council member. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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At the request of Mayor McShane, Assistant City Manager Richards called for nominations.

Councilmember Buck stated he was impressed by all the candidates and their willingness to step forward and serve. He stated he was interested in candidates who were willing to run in the November election. He nominated **David Wright**.

Councilmember Knol stated she was pleased with the selection of candidates. She noted they would all bring unique qualities to the Council. She stated her preference for someone who could step right into the position. She noted she does not necessarily agree 100% with all the views of each candidate, but welcomes diversity of opinions on Council. She further noted that some of the best discussions on Council were a result of differing opinions. She nominated **Greg Cowley**.

Councilmember Wiggins nominated **Alton Bennett**. He cited Mr. Bennett's current service on the Planning Committee, his experience as a former Mayor and Councilmember, and noted he would have the shortest learning curve of all the candidates. He stated his decision was not affected by whether or not a candidate intended to run in the November election. He noted the next eight months would be very important to the history of Farmington and Mr. Bennett provides the best qualifications.

Mayor McShane also nominated **Alton Bennett**. She stated this is a critical time for Farmington, especially with three new Councilmembers and new staff members. She noted the importance of a candidate with historical perspective. She stated a candidate should understand all aspects of government and not be afraid to give their opinion. She cited a deep commitment and love of the City as important attributes.

Richards announced David Wright, Greg Cowley and Alton Bennett as the three nominations.

The Clerk recorded the vote as follows:

Bennett	2 votes (McShane, Wiggins)
Cowley	1 vote (Knol)
Wright	1 vote (Buck)

Council agreed to a second round of nominations allowing two nominations from each member.

Richards recorded the second round of nominations as follows:

Knol	- Cowley, Wright
Wiggins	- Bennett, McGowan
Buck	- Wright, Cowley
McShane	- Bennett, Wright

Discussion followed concerning the attributes of the nominees.

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The Clerk recorded the vote as follows:

Buck - Wright
Knol - Cowley
McShane - Wright
Wiggins - Wright

David Wright, having received a majority vote, was appointed to fill an unexpired term on City Council. Mayor McShane thanked Council for their kind and positive words about the candidates and willingness to compromise.

Mayor McShane requested Administration send a letter to each candidate thanking them for their time and effort in the application and interview process. She expressed the City's desire to involve the candidates in other boards and commissions. She recognized the willingness to serve and sincerity of the candidates.

Councilmember Knol also recognized the willingness of Council to compromise to achieve a decision.

Councilmember Buck expressed his pleasure at the number and quality of candidates. He stated this type of participation reflects the positive attributes of Farmington and the interest this vacancy evoked. He thanked the candidates for their time and effort and noted the decision was a difficult one.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY(DDA)
BOARD MEMBERS**

For the DDA appointments, Council concurred to follow the same process used for the Council appointment. In addition, City Attorney Schultz advised a minimum of two appointees must be business owners. He suggested Council vote on the business owners first and then address at-large appointments. He noted under statute DDA positions are typically Mayoral appointments, however, historically Farmington has treated these positions as Council appointments.

Council proceeded with the nomination and voting process to fill the DDA vacancies.

The following candidates received a majority vote and were appointed by Council to the Downtown Development Authority for four-year terms ending February 28, 2011: David Cornwell, Greg Cowley (reappointment), Michael Mazzoni and Robert Rock.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Buck recommended Council discuss the request from Farmington Hills for a donation to the skate park in light of the February 28, 2007 deadline for pledges and a letter received from Farmington Hills City Manager Steve Brock.

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Buck stated Council is under great duress to conduct full deliberation on the matter and expressed desire for more time to thoroughly study the issue. He expressed his support for the skate park and recognized the efforts of Mr. Riley and advocates for the park.

Mayor McShane stated this is an important issue and Council cares very much about this effort on behalf of Farmington Hills, however, Council has a commitment to the City budget process.

Councilmember Wiggins also recognized Council's support for the skate park. He noted it is in the City's Master Plan and would benefit both Farmington residents and businesses. He stated it would also benefit the Public Safety Department in their effort to keep City streets free of skateboarders. He stated the requested donation is a large expenditure that would normally go through the budgetary process. He noted a budget decision with a deadline of February 28, 2007 would have been part of the FY 2006-07 budget process which would have been roughly a year ago.

Wiggins stated he has a difficult time approving the budget expenditure as requested. He noted funding a capital expenditure in Farmington Hills would set a precedent which may or may not be a bad idea. He stated this is a decision that cannot be made lightly. He further stated this is an eleventh hour request that should have been made at the first hour in order to allow due diligence and the budget process to work.

Mayor McShane requested Administration draft a letter of response to Steve Brock that would include Council's comments.

Councilmember Knol expressed agreement with Councilmember Wiggins. She stated Council's decision is not about how committed the City is to the skate park. She noted the general consensus of the Council is in support of the park, but Council cannot make a decision overnight on an \$80,000 donation. She stated there is a process in place for capital expenditures and noted this donation would be setting precedence.

Knol pointed out there are plans for a splash park at Heritage Park which is fully supported by Farmington. She stated families with children under the age of ten in Farmington and Farmington Hills would like to have a splash park. She noted it is a great project and asked whether it is more important than a skate park. She stated her intention is not to say one is more important than the other, but rather there needs to be a process in place for evaluating where a large sum of taxpayer money is going to be spent. She questioned if Council supports the skate park with \$80K how then would Council respond to a request from Farmington Hills for support of a splash park.

Knol suggested this is a much larger discussion than a donation to a skate park. She stated it is a discussion about the future of Parks in Farmington and Farmington Hills. She noted the many parks in the Farmington/Farmington Hills area that are enjoyed by residents of both cities. She stated the larger discussion is funding of parks in general.

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Buck expressed concern regarding the numbers associated with the skate park. He stated, based on his review, the City of Farmington Hills' contribution is in the \$40K to \$50K range not counting the land costs. He noted that contribution translates into .50 per person in Farmington Hills. He stated the requested donation from Farmington would equate to \$8.00 per resident. He suggested if the City attempted to be commensurate with Farmington Hills the donation would be about \$4000 or .50 per resident.

Mayor McShane expressed the seriousness of this issue. She stated this is a larger issue than a Skate Park. She suggested that if Farmington conducts a joint study with Farmington Hills regarding the consolidation recommendation, then this issue could be a part of that study. She stated the study could include a review of the park system and whether the two cities should share in capital projects. She noted Farmington Hills has not shared in any of Farmington's capital projects. She further noted Farmington's recreation plan that contains a number of projects which still need to be funded. She stated it is difficult to make a donation to other projects and ignore the City's recreation plan. She noted she personally donated money to the skate park through the purchase of a brick, an opportunity open to everyone. She encouraged everyone to buy a brick and with matching funds from Mr. Riley the goal could be reached.

Mayor McShane also noted the City would like to install an ice rink in Riley Park. She stated the Skate Park issue leads to the greater question of whether the cities can support each others projects. She noted the significant size difference of the cities. She further noted this City is known for its incredible volunteers.

Mayor McShane directed City Administration to draft a letter to Farmington Hills including Council's comments in order to clearly communicate Council's position on this issue.

Wiggins asked Attorney Schultz if the City were to make a contribution or payment on a capital project in Farmington Hills would it affect the City's liability on that project.

Attorney Schultz responded that City Manager Pastue has indicated a need for an intergovernmental agreement if a contribution is made to a capital project outside the City. He stated the City would not be part owner of a building unless the City's name was on the title to the improvements.

Councilmember Buck made a motion to allocate \$4,000 to the skate park pending a 30-day review of the implications on the City's budget.

Discussion followed regarding the time frame for review of budget implications.

Mayor McShane questioned what account the funds would be drawn from.

Attorney Schultz suggested stating in the motion whether the funds would come from Parks and Recreation or the General Fund upon evaluation of the costs by

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Administration. He further suggested including an intergovernmental agreement in the motion.

Responding to a question, Attorney Schultz stated the intergovernmental agreement would outline the terms of payment, liability, etc. which would come back to Council for consideration.

Discussion followed regarding from where the funds would be drawn.

Buck stated the intent of his motion is to take some action in response to the funding request for the skate park.

Wiggins asked whether the motion put forth by Buck would include an intergovernmental agreement, contribution of \$4,000 pending a budget review and that the agreement would be brought back to Council for review. He stated in the interest of honoring Mr. Riley and recognizing the fact that the skate park would be beneficial to residents he would second the motion.

Knol stated that *if* Council concurs with the motion they are essentially agreeing to contribute \$4,000 to the skate park because they would not be likely to withdraw from the commitment at a future date.

02-07-043 MOTION by Knol, seconded by Wiggins, to table a motion to allocate \$4,000 to the Skate Park pending a review of the implications on City budget. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

COUNCIL COMMENT

Buck complimented his fellow Councilmembers for their efforts in the appointment process, stating it was really outstanding.

Wiggins stated it was easy to reach a compromise for both the Council and DDA appointments because of the quality applicants.

Knol also recognized the success of the appointment process. She stated that although some Councilmembers may not have gotten their first choice, everyone at least got their first or second choice.

Mayor McShane recognized the open and democratic process used in making the appointments.

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ADJOURNMENT

02-07-044 MOTION by Knol, seconded by Wiggins, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

JoAnne M. McShane, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: March 19, 2007