

**MEETING MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL JOINT STUDY SESSION MEETING  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS AND  
CITY OF FARMINGTON  
MARCH 24, 2014 – 6:00PM  
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM**

The City Council study session meeting was called to order by Mayor Brickner at 6:00p.m.

Farmington Hills Council Members Present: Brickner, Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey and Steckloff

Farmington Hills Council Members Absent: None

Farmington Council Members Present: Galvin, Schneeman and Scott

Farmington Council Members Absent: Cowley and McShane

Others Present: Farmington Hills City Manager Brock, Farmington City Manager Pastue, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Boyer, Assistant to the City Manager Geinzer, Director Mekjian and Attorney Joppich

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY ENERGY PRIZE:**

Assistant to the City Manager, Nate Geinzer, introduced Chair Mark VanEtten and Vice Chair Leon Zolkower to say a few words regarding this program.

Mr. VanEtten stated that members of the Commissioner for Energy and Environmental Sustainability are present this evening to discuss the Georgetown University Energy Prize, which is a national program that they would like the City to take part in to reduce energy per capita. He stated that they would be working with the utility companies and schools to generate and implement plans for scalable reductions in energy that would be monitored by the utility companies. He feels this program will provide the city with excellent visibility as it is a national program.

Mr. Geinzer noted that the United States wastes over half of the amount of energy generated and to address this issue Georgetown University came up with this energy prize competition. He explained how the competition works; resources required and potential funding and sponsorships for the program. Mr. Geinzer commented that if Council wishes to proceed with taking part in the competition, he feels Earth Day would be a good day to make that announcement.

It was noted that this is a national competition by which local governments would work with area schools and residents to reduce energy consumption over a two-year period; and work with the utility companies to track their usage. The goals of the competition are to encourage innovative replicable strategies to reduce residential and municipal building energy consumption, educate the public and reward communities for their efforts. Mr. Geinzer stated that there is a \$5,000,000 dollar prize back to the community who wins this competition; and he strongly believes that the Farmington/Farmington Hills communities can be a strong competitor for that prize.

Councilmember Lerner inquired what type of budget would be required for this program. Mr. Geinzer responded that the program outline would dictate the needs and they are attempting to get sponsorship; but he would anticipate ¾ of a full-time staff equivalent and promotional funding.

Mayor Galvin inquired about tracking the progress. Mr. Geinzer explained that communities would be able to track their own progress against other communities participating in the program and use that for motivation.

In answer to inquiries by Councilmembers, Mr. Geinzer pointed out that this only involves residential and municipal buildings and so new or revitalized office complexes would not impact the program. He also noted that as of now there is one grand prize award, but they are discussing the possibility of additional prizes. He noted that the communities would be recognized nationally for their participation and particularly the top 10 communities would receive additional recognition. He stated that the program also not only educates the community on energy efficiency but gets the residents involved in a program that could potentially bring money back to their community for other programs, etc.

Councilmember Steckloff felt the information provided was very broad and questioned if there was a draft of the proposed program that could be sent to Council. Mr. Geinzer stated that there was not and that he needed the commitment from both Councils that there is enough interest to move forward. He then could create a team and have the Memorandum of Understanding prepared for both Councils to review.

Some concern was expressed about the potential funding that would be required for the program, but it was the general consensus of both the Farmington and Farmington Hills City Councils to move forward with the first step and submit a letter of intent and application to participate.

**DETROIT WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT (DWSD) WATER AUTHORITY NOTION UPDATE:**

Water Resources Commissioner Nash updated the City Councils on the future of the Detroit Water and Sewer Department. He stated that the WRC has requested audit reports and other information that they are still waiting to receive in order to make a determination if they should remain with DWSD. He noted that he will be proposing to the Board of Commissioners in April funding to conduct a study on what it would take to do their own water and sewer system. Although there are many questions involved with that, including whether the DEQ would look favorably on that or not, he feels it is worth studying.

Mr. Nash added that the rates are set by the City of Detroit yet they have more than a 55% delinquency rate and others just not paying the bills; and he does not want paying customers to be saddled with those expenses.

Discussion was held on the infrastructure and who owns that as well as what it might take for the County to have their own system.

Mayor Galvin inquired about the internal controls. Mr. Nash commented that the water quality is some of the best in the country, but the issue is with the infrastructure. He stated that the Board is dominated by the City of Detroit, but he still has staff on the Board and they do have some say. He added that his staff has faith in Sue McCormick who is involved in the management. He noted that the issues have been with the Attorneys who are handling the bankruptcy.

City Manager Brock inquired who makes the final decision on accepting or not accepting the offer from DWSD. Mr. Nash responded the Board of Commissioners would have to approve any offer.

City Manager Brock provided an update on Grand River road conditions. He noted that the State prioritized an extra \$115,000,000 towards state roads, and he completed the forms required to try and obtain some of that funding for Grand River.

**PRESENTATION ON THE MIDDLEBELT TUNNEL PROJECT:**

Sue Coffey, Water Resource Commission Manager, commented that this project was previously discussed with City Council. She noted that the communities' attorneys were not comfortable with the proposed contracts and they have worked through those issues. She presented City Council with the proposed project area, stating that there are 15 communities in the sanitary sewer system and discussed what portion the County owns.

Ms. Coffey noted that it was discovered that system upgrades were needed to meet requirements as sanitary sewer overflow was occurring. She stated that there are capacity issues with the current system. These deficiencies were noted in the 1980's, and they were dealt with through various projects. She stated that they now have a court ordered requirement to upgrade the system and the Middlebelt Tunnel Project is the first of several proposed projects, which would involve 4 of the communities on the system.

Councilmember Steckloff inquired why the City of Farmington Hills would be required to pay 53% of the project costs.

Ms. Coffey explained the cost allocation method used.

In answer to Councilmember Lerner, Consultant Tim Miner explained how the peak flow from Farmington Hills was measured.

Mr. Lerner commented that he could not visually grasp the percentage being charged to Farmington Hills based on the map provided. Ms. Coffey further explained that the flow was directly metered and that is the data that was used.

Councilmember Massey commented on the development to the north of Farmington Hills and also questioned Farmington Hills being responsible for 53% of the project costs based on the map and information provided. He stated that he had asked to see the figures the first time this issue was discussed and that he needs to see the data to support paying 53% of the costs.

Mr. Brock confirmed that this was rater payer funded. He added that the other communities paying for the project also questioned the costs and WRC analyzed the numbers again and came up with very similar figures.

Ms. Coffey commented that the annual cost for the average customer would be approximately \$65.75 and the minimum user cost would be approximately \$26.50

Tom Maxwell, WRC, provided construction details on the proposed tunnel project, noting that it would be 9 foot in diameter and the storage volume would be 3.6 million gallons. He showed a map of the project area and graphic illustration of how the tunnel would operate and handle the sanitary sewer overflow. Mr. Maxwell discussed traffic impact during construction and stated that they would try to maintain two-way traffic during most of the construction.

Ms. Coffey stated that the proposed contract is on the City Council regular meeting agenda for consideration.

It was noted that this construction would be taking place at the same time as the Northwestern construction and the proposed timeline is June 2014 through November 2016.

City Manager Brock stated that the contract could be approved at the regular meeting with contingencies if that was the desire of Council, but staff would like to provide Council with any information they need without delaying the process.

Ms. Coffey reiterated that the calculations were based on metered data and agreed that they need to show that.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk