

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
DECEMBER 9, 2019

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Barnett at 6:00pm.

Council Members Present: Barnett, Boleware, Bridges, Knol, Massey, Newlin and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, Director Barr, Court Administrator Walsh, Judges Brady and Parker and City Attorney Joppich

47TH DISTRICT COURT UPDATE

Dave Walsh, Court Administrator, explained that the 47th District Court is an independent agency funded by both the Cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills. Administrator Walsh provided an overview of the court including an explanation of how the revenue is distributed and the budget process. He discussed the collection program implemented in 2003 to recoup outstanding fees; the revenue impact of legalizing marihuana; License Clearance Project designed to assist defendants in paying their fees by offering payment plan options and the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission.

Judge Parker discussed the Sobriety Court Program. It was questioned whether there would be a program established for marihuana use. Judge Brady responded that there is still much research being done on acceptable levels of marihuana and operating a vehicle, etc. at this time.

DTE UPDATE

Regional Manager Michael Palchesko introduced Engineering Manager Mike Witkowski and Operations Manager Shannon Palmer of DTE. Mike Witkowski discussed the following functions and activities of the engineering team:

- Supporting growth of community
- Reliability – it was noted that of the 50,000 DTE customers in Farmington Hills, the average customer experienced one power outage per year with the average outage between 9 and 10 hours, which is above the target for DTE
- Major work planned in the city that included the Drexel Substation at 12 Mile and Drake Roads that was damaged by fire
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- Semi-private substations in the northwest portion of Farmington Hills that would provide DTE with capacity to use elsewhere
- Bridges at the 14Mile and Drake area

It was noted that Michigan had the 4th highest number of outages in 2017 and 65-65% of outages are related to tree trimming.

Shannon Palmer, Operations Manager for Tree Trimming, explained the efforts being made with regard to the tree trimming program and getting back to a 5-year cycle. She noted a 75% reduction in tree related outages where DTE has already trimmed.

Discussion was held on tree trimming and making that a priority. City Manager Boyer asked that the city is provided with the proposed map where tree trimming will take place so that they can share that with residents and businesses in the area.

Assistant City Manager Gary Mekjian advised DTE that he should be the city contact for tree trimming taking place along the major roads.

In answer to Council, Mr. Witkowski noted that the Drexel substation will be fully functional by early to mid-summer.

Mayor Barnett requested that DTE is addressing obsolete equipment and stated that she would like future discussions with DTE to include solar panels and payback for residents utilizing such features.

Mr. Witkowski addressed a question on smart meters noting that they are helpful in identifying outages, although they still encourage residents to call in any outages. The meters also serve as a diagnostic standpoint where they can review voltage profiles and DTE can ping meters to determine if there is power at a specific location.

Mr. Palchesko noted that DTE is on track with regard to renewable energy sources.

City Manager Boyer commented that while that is important, the infrastructure itself is a necessity. Mr. Palchesko agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk