

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
MAY 24, 2021 – 6:00PM

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was held electronically and called to order by Mayor Barnett at 6:00pm. Members were asked to state their name and location (city and state) as to where they were attending the electronic meeting.

Council Members Present: Jackie Boleware, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Valerie Knol, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Ken Massey, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Mary Newlin, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Matt Strickfaden, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Michael Bridges, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Vicki Barnett, Farmington Hills, Michigan

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Valentine. Directors Gardiner, Police Chief King, Fire Chief Unruh, City Attorney Joppich and City Planning Consultant Arroyo

MARIJUANA INDUSTRY INFORMATION GATHERING & PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN

Steve Joppich, City Attorney, explained that the information gathering and public outreach plan before Council is a working draft that is being brought back after previous discussion and input by City Council. As there was not sufficient time to go through the entire document and receive all of the input that was needed, the document is being presented with the changes as noted at the last study session and there are portions highlighted where more Council input is still needed. He pointed out that a couple areas where he would like further direction is regarding the selection of participants and whether Council would like a member of the industry to be able to participate in more than one session or if they want to limit each participant to only one session to broaden the pool of participants; and whether Council wanted to allow for written questions before and/or after the information gathering sessions.

It was questioned if there would be input by other communities who have administered licenses relating to their experience or concerns with licensing.

City Manager Mekjian stated that part of the final steps of the plan include a process for gathering information from other municipalities, including reaching out to the Michigan Municipal League to incorporate information from both sides of the process.

Attorney Joppich added that his office has already done some research on other states that he could also share.

Discussion was held on participants receiving the questions prior to each session or having real-time questions, the number of participants in each session and how the city would go about obtaining a diverse pool of participants. Council consensus was for the participants to only attend one session to allow for a broader pool of participants and to allow for both pre-prepared questions as well as free-flowing questions as needed.

Attorney Joppich explained that the form that is required to be completed by participants could include questions and information that would limit each participant to one session in their field of expertise and help gain information to meet the city's goal of diversity. Based on Council's direction at the last study session, the plan is to take the first 12 applicants for each session and if the city does not believe it has the diverse group Council is seeking, more participants could be included to meet that objective.

Council discussed various ways to get this information out to the public including using the homeowners' associations, school list serves, neighborhood apps, various websites, Facebook, press releases, radio and news stations and utilizing the HAWK signage and electronic signs at city hall.

Mayor Barnett stated that it should be clear to the industry participants that these sessions have nothing to do with qualifying them for a license and is not about promoting their business. She summarized that there would be recorded, fact-finding sessions with the industry available for public viewing and posted to the city website and then formalized into a report that would also be made available to the public. She envisioned hosting public input sessions following Council's review of the report and perhaps as a final option, placing a proposal on a future ballot.

Council agreed there should be a multi-media approach to dispersing the information to the general public.

Attorney Joppich asked for clarification on the public input sessions. It was staff's understanding that Council wanted public input as part of the informational sessions and not as a final step as he had initially proposed.

Mayor Barnett clarified and Council concurred that the fact-finding sessions should be recorded and available for viewing by the public with separate public outreach sessions with City Council following the fact-finding sessions to obtain public comment and input prior to any action by Council.

Attorney Joppich stated that he will include public outreach in the plan following the information gathering sessions and include some of the outreach ideas mentioned.

Other questions to be answered included:

- What is the ideal capitalization level for some of these businesses
- What happens if the business goes under
- How have other communities dealt with policing issues and their procedures

It was suggested including local ordinances from other communities as appendices to the report.

Mr. Arroyo, Planning Consultant, added that he can also provide some information that that he has learned in working with other communities.

Attorney Joppich inquired about public involvement during the fact-finding sessions. It was noted that Mr. Arroyo would be moderating those sessions.

Council consensus was to allow for questions related to business operations by the public during the fact-finding sessions and to allow for questions to be submitted in advance or taken at the sessions. Mr. Arroyo, as the moderator, would clarify that any opinions or comments for Council should be emailed to the Mayor and Council or shared at the public forums that will be held in the future.

Attorney Joppich noted that he expanded the information to be requested from other communities to include social equity programs, challenges and administrative demands on the local community and unexpected impacts on the community both positive and negative. He inquired if there was other information that Council wanted to include. No additional information was mentioned at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

The study session meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk