

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER
OCTOBER 19, 2015 – 7:30PM

The special meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Brickner at 7:37pm.

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

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Clerk Smith, Assistant to the City Manager, Director Randle, Fire Chief Bartsch and City Attorney Joppich

DELIBERATION AND CONSIDERATION OF SELECTING A CITY MANAGER

Mayor Brickner explained the interview process that took place over the weekend in public meetings and commented that he was very impressed with all of the candidates. He felt that they all had good presentations and resumes and he was impressed with the quality of candidates.

Mayor Brickner asked that each City Council member indicate their top candidate(s) and reasons to support their decision.

Councilmember Steckloff stated that she is still trying to decide between two of the candidates. She felt that all of the candidates did a great job. She was extremely impressed by Mr. Murphy and felt he had very innovative ideas but was concerned that he would be working with a much smaller budget. She also felt that Mr. Boyer would provide for a seamless transition and has done a great job so far as Acting City Manager.

Councilmember Knol agreed that of the candidates did a good job and that there were positive aspects to each of them. She felt Mr. Murphy provided an excellent presentation and she liked his energy and innovative ideas. She also felt that Mr. Lasley did a nice job and has an operational knowledge of the City that could provide for a seamless transition as would Mr. Boyer. She stated that she likes Mr. Boyer's approachable style and his focus on the community and quality of life of the residents and the fact that he has good communication already with the residents and City Council. She also feels that selecting Mr. Boyer would create good morale within the City, which is important; and for those reasons he would be her top candidate.

Councilmember Lerner thanked Director Randle for the list of core questions provided and guiding Council through the process. He commented on some of the questions asked and answers provided. He stated that the City needs a leader in this position and when he thought of having that seamless transition that led him to look at the internal candidates further. He feels that Mr. Boyer has the advantage of having worked as Assistant City Manager and now Acting City Manager. While he felt that Mr. Lasley brings a lot to the table operationally, he liked that Mr. Boyer spoke about the importance of developing staff and creating a succession plan.

Councilmember Bridges commented that all of the candidates are qualified for the position, but he felt that 1 or 2 stood out among the others. He felt that Mr. Murphy has broad executive management experience and was up to date with the current challenges of Farmington Hills and that his 90-Day Transition Plan was on target with what the City's needs. He also felt that Mr. Lasley did an effective job

in his interview and has a broad operational knowledge of the City. He felt that Mr. Murphy was his top candidate as he was likely to be an effective leader inside and outside of City Hall and provided great ideas and examples of his leadership. Mr. Bridges felt that Mr. Murphy had a “take charge” attitude and was sincere in his presentation and the City would not lose a second with regard to performance and effectiveness. He added that his second choice would be Mr. Lasley. He felt Mr. Boyer did a good job but did not stack up to those other 2 candidates. He felt that Mr. Jackson’s experience was evident but he had some concerns with his reasons for leaving other employers.

Councilmember Bruce stated that when Council was first looking into the process they would use to select a City Manager, he wanted to open the search up nationally even though he felt it would be tough for an external candidate to stack up to Mr. Boyer and his experience and relationships within the City, and Mr. Boyer puts people first. He stated that the three other candidates were excellent candidates, but did not compare to Mr. Boyer given his experience in the City and his vote is for Mr. Boyer.

Mayor Pro-Tem Massey stated that he echoes many of the sentiments of the other Council members and appreciated the excellent candidates and their interest in the community. He thanked Director Randle for assisting City Council through this process. He stated that he took a different approach to considering the candidates and their qualifications and looked at some of his own criteria for a City Manager that included management experience, financial experience, city services experience, communication, innovation, focus on services, personality and ability to work with others in the community and long-term views; and he ranked those areas 1 to 5 based on the answers to the interview questions and came up with his top choice. He added that one answer that resonated with him was when Council asked what a City Manager needs and the answer was the ability to develop trust with the Council, residents and businesses and that this trust has to be earned. He stated that for him it came down to longevity and that long-term focus and Mr. Boyer came out on top. He felt that Mr. Lasley did an excellent job and Mr. Murphy’s presentation was excellent; but given Mr. Boyer’s understanding of the community and executive management experience that yielded him and his focus on customer service, he came out ahead of the other candidates.

Mayor Brickner also thanked Director Randle for his assistance. He stated that he was impressed with all of the candidates and each had a different style and excellent skills in different areas. Mr. Murphy blew him away with his presentation. Mr. Boyer did an excellent job managing the golf course project as Director of Special Services and had a good teacher when it comes to managing the City in Mr. Brock. He stated all of the candidates had their strengths, but he spoke to many department heads prior to the start of this process and they all wanted a person that could work well with staff. Mayor Brickner commented on the lack of public at the interview process that he took as a sign that the public is putting their trust in the City Council. He wants to go along with the wishes of staff and keep them happy as he feels that makes for a better work environment. He added that the external candidates talked about things they would do and some of those were already being done here in Farmington Hills and he thinks that is a good sign. He is in favor of hiring Dave Boyer as the City Manager as he has the trust of the employees and that he can keep the City going in the right direction.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Lerner, to conditionally offer the position of Farmington Hills City Manager to Dave Boyer and instruct the Mayor and City Attorney to negotiate an employment agreement with him and present it to Council for its final approval.

MOTION CARRIED 6-1 (Bridges opposed)

Mayor Pro-Tem Massey stated that Council would like to show support for the new City Manager and asked if Dr. Bruce would consider making a motion for a unanimous vote to be cast.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Lerner, to make a unanimous vote in favor of appointing Dave Boyer as the new permanent City Manager of Farmington Hills.

Councilmember Bridges inquired what this vote would mean. City Attorney Joppich explained that this is a motion typically made once a body has voted on a matter and wants to consider making it unanimous to show support to the person being appointed.

Mayor Pro-Tem Massey stated that the dissenting vote was already cast and recorded and this would be an opportunity to show unanimous support moving forward and he believes it would be appropriate.

Councilmember Bridges stated that he doesn't understand the motion and his position is firm. He made his analysis and decision regarding the candidates.

Councilmember Bruce explained that the vote to appoint the City Manager has been taken and is recorded but this is an opportunity to show that the entire Council is behind this person.

Councilmember Bridges thanked Mr. Bruce for the explanation. He stated that he is a principle person and sincere in his vote. He wants Mr. Boyer to be successful and would not work against him; but he feels he has a right to express his opinion. He stated that Mr. Boyer is qualified but feels the other two candidates he mentioned earlier were more qualified.

MOTION CARRIED 6-1 (Bridges opposed)

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further discussion, the special meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk