

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
FEBRUARY 27, 2017

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

Council Members Present: Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey, Rich (arrived at 7:00pm) and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, Police Chief Nebus, Fire Chief Unruh and City Attorney Joppich

OVERVIEW OF EMERGENCY CENTER OPERATIONS

City Manager Boyer stated that the city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has participants from all city departments who train several times a year for various events; and he feels that the city is well prepared in the event of an emergency.

Fire Chief Jon Unruh stated that the city prepares for natural and man-made disasters or events. He explained the PA 390 Emergency Management Act and outlined the requirements for emergency management under the Act. He noted that Farmington Hills is a PA 390 city along with 3 other communities; but most communities fall under the jurisdiction of the County emergency management operations. He stated that the city runs its own emergency management operations and they don't necessarily rely on the county or state, although they do work in conjunction with these other entities.

James Neufeld, Fire Inspector and Emergency Operations Manager, explained the details of PA 390 that include Planning, Mitigation, Response and Recovery for an emergency event. The planning process includes an EAG or Emergency Action Guidelines that are prepared, updated and tested through exercises and drills through the year. The city also works with the county and state to conduct drills in preparation of larger and more wide-spread disasters. He noted that the city has adopted the Oakland County Mitigation Plan but has tailored that to meet the needs of Farmington Hills. Staff regularly trains with all departments on response to an event, which is part of the requirements under PA 390; and the city's Department of Public Works has been instrumental in developing the city's plan for Recovery and Debris Management that includes contracting with Waste Management for debris hauling and agreements with local universities for on-site storage of debris.

Inspector Neufeld went on to discuss the advantages of being a PA 390 community that includes professional relationships with the Michigan State Police, Homeland Security, Grant Allocation Committee, local school districts and the city's Emergency Preparedness Commission.

Councilmember Bridges inquired about the criteria for being a PA 390 community. Inspector Neufeld responded that the community must follow the guidelines outlined in the Act as far as training and required drills and complete required federal paperwork.

Chief Unruh added that being a PA 390 community also provides the city "front row" access to federal grant monies for emergency operation purposes.

Police Commander Dan Rodriguez explained the training offered for the Police Department for emergency events. He noted the goal is to train as often as possible so they try to engage Officers at least once a month through web-based videos or other trainings. He mentioned that in 2016 the Police Officers conducted 3-day live fire training and in 2017 Officers began training with firearm simulators.

Inspector Neufeld mentioned the ties with other community entities for purposes of shelter and community aid and mentioned that the Fire Department is now teaching CPR in the schools. He noted that Police and Fire also assist the local and parochial schools with drills; and Police and Fire are encouraging schools and places of worship to go through ALICE training.

Police Lieutenant Jeff King spoke about OAK-TAC, the law enforcement coordinating group, whose focus is to coordinate mutual aid so that communities are operating under the same policies and have had trainings that support those policies. He stated that the group includes 38 Oakland County law enforcement agencies that have conducted several large-scale exercises.

It was noted that Oakland County conducted an exercise on February 8th to test communications that included several local Emergency Operation Centers, including Farmington Hills.

Councilmember Lerner inquired about the use of drones. Inspector Neufeld stated that these types of devices are available through the State and they are eager to use this technology to assist with damage assessment.

Commander Rodriguez and Lieutenant King discussed an incident involving a suicidal man in Heritage Park who was armed with a gun, lessons learned and how staff utilized previous training to handle this dangerous situation to make sure everyone involved was safe.

Commander Rodriguez added that staff has implemented emergency operation procedures and OAK-TAC training during big events including Presidential campaigns, Forty Works firework display and when American Idol came to Farmington Hills.

Mayor Massey thanked staff for the presentation and reminded Council that while their first thought may be to get involved, their job is to step back and let the professional staff handle any emergency situation. City Council is kept well informed of all situations by staff contacting the Mayor and the Mayor relaying that information to the rest of Council.

Councilmember Rich arrived at 7pm.

MANAGEMENT AUDIT SURVEY QUESTIONS

City Manager Boyer explained that the city has the opportunity within the management audit survey to include at least 3 questions that are specific to Farmington Hills and he wanted to get input from City Council. He mentioned that in the last survey the questions were open-ended and he suggested more specific questions for this year's survey.

Discussion was held and it was agreed upon that the survey should include at least one question regarding road rehabilitation and funding options. Council felt the wording of this would be difficult but should be broad enough to provide options and specific enough to get appropriate feedback.

City Manager Boyer asked Council to email him or Assistant City Manager Mekjian with any further questions they might like to include after giving this some thought.

Councilmember Bridges inquired how staff weighs the results of the surveys. Mr. Boyer responded that the way the survey is worded, it provides an overall rating of how the public feels about the city and services provided and staff reviews those areas where the survey indicates improvements could be made and discusses ways to make those improvements where needed.

Councilmember Knol felt that including a road funding question was good to obtain that feedback but that this issue is still worthy of further discussion and options.

Mayor Pro-Tem Steckloff inquired about how the city is getting its sampling for the survey.

Assistant City Manager Mekjian stated that it would be a direct mail survey to a number of households as determined to provide the city with adequate sampling.

City Manager Boyer added that the city is having a consultant review the options for a road millage and this would be a topic for another study session meeting.

Councilmember Bruce expressed concern that the road funding question may be too complex in order to get good feedback.

Councilmember Bridges agreed. While he felt including the questions on the survey would be fine, he did not believe the survey results should be the driving factor of how the city proceeds.

City Manager Boyer stated that staff would work on adequate wording for the questions to obtain the information they are seeking, but assured Council that the road funding issue would be a separate topic of discussion at another study session and future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk