

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER  
FEBRUARY 5, 2024 – 7:30 PM**

The regular meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 7:30pm.

Council Members Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bridges, Bruce, Dwyer, Knol and Rich

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Lindahl, Assistant City Manager Mondora, Director Brown, Fire Chief Unruh, Police Chief King and City Attorney Joppich

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Alvin Lynn, Optimist Club President, led the pledge of allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Boleware, to approve the agenda as amended, to move item #4, Consideration of approval of appointment of Mark Berke as magistrate to the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court. CMR 1-24-10, before Correspondence.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING OPTIMIST DAY 2024**

The following Proclamation was read by Mayor Pro Tem Bridges and accepted by Alvin Lynn, Optimist Club President:

**PROCLAMATION  
In Recognition of Optimist Day  
February 2024**

**WHEREAS,** Optimist International is a worldwide organization of people committed to optimism and self-development for the improvement of youth and community; and

**WHEREAS,** Optimist Day is recognized and celebrated annually on the first Thursday of February to recognize local Optimist organizations, celebrate their contributions to the community and encourage citizens to do something that brings out optimism in themselves or others; and

**WHEREAS,** the Optimist Club of Farmington & Farmington Hills has been a vital part of the community for more than 40 years; and

**WHEREAS,** this voluntary organization of civic-minded men and women is dedicated to community service, making a difference in the lives of others, and working with young people to help them reach their potential to make their dreams come true; and

**WHEREAS,** the membership of the Optimist Club of Farmington & Farmington Hills is composed of citizens drawn from business, industry, government, and other professions who use their talent and skills to contribute to the community in which they and their families draw daily benefits; and

**WHEREAS,** there are 2,500 Optimist Clubs in Optimist International, with more than 70,000 members worldwide who are contributing to their respective communities and encouraging a greater exchange of ideas between young people and adults.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby recognize the **Optimist Club of Farmington & Farmington Hills** and call upon our citizens, public and private institutions, businesses and schools to thank our local Optimist Club and honor this vital organization committed to the improvement of youth and community.

**PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THAT HATE HAS NO HOME IN FARMINGTON HILLS**

Mayor Rich expressed the following to the community members of Farmington Hills:

Unfortunately, we find ourselves in an era where instability, conflict, and war dominate the headlines. As the most diverse community in Oakland County, these issues are understandably very personal to many of our Farmington Hills neighbors, including some present in this room (and this includes members of council and myself). Some of our neighbor's loved ones live in countries where the very essence of hate and suffering is allowed to thrive, leaving women and children with no shelter from harm.

While we may not be experts in foreign policy, we possess a deep understanding of our community and its dynamics. We recognize that our community is characterized by compassion for one another.

In recent weeks, certain communities have symbolically called for a ceasefire through proclamations. However, it's worth noting that in 2005, members of the City Council adopted a policy discontinuing resolutions and proclamations related to foreign policy or diplomacy in other countries.

Despite this, we appreciate community members feeling empowered to use this public space to express their sentiments. This space will continue to serve as a safe and open forum for anyone in our community to have their voices heard, and equally important, to explore diversity in thought.

Irrespective of conflicts unfolding globally, it is imperative to emphasize that hate has no place in our community. Therefore, I issue the following proclamation:

**PROCLAMATION  
Hate Has No Home  
Feb. 5, 2024**

**WHEREAS,** the City of Farmington Hills is one of the most diverse communities in Oakland County with more than 83,000 residents who speak more than 60 languages; and

**WHEREAS,** the City's diversity allows its residents to listen to and learn from one another to become more understanding of each other's struggles and ideals; and

- WHEREAS,** City leaders have taken strategic and specific actions to promote a sense of belonging and inclusion among our community members, businesses, visitors, and employees; and
- WHEREAS,** Farmington Hills stands by its promise to keep its community vibrant, safe and diverse by condemning violence; and
- WHEREAS,** conflicts across the globe have led to significant loss of life and suffering, affecting the global community, including members of this community; and
- WHEREAS,** conflicts and acts of hate affect the mental and physical wellness and sense of security among many members of our citizenry, and employees; and
- WHEREAS,** the City reaffirms its commitment to enforce a zero-tolerance policy for hate crimes and to stand up against all forms of racism, prejudice, homophobia, and intolerance.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim that **hate has no home** in this community and call upon all within Farmington Hills to recognize that we are stronger when we encourage civility, understanding, empathy and peace. I encourage all to express unwavering support for all members of our community, including those impacted by global factors. I declare that hate and violence have no home in our City, and I encourage all in our community to learn from those who have different experiences or come from different backgrounds to ensure the City of Farmington Hills is a place that practices compassion, and where everyone is welcome. Together, we are one Farmington Hills.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF MARK BERKE AS MAGISTRATE TO THE 47<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT. CMR 1-24-10**

47<sup>th</sup> District Court Administrator Matthew Friedrich introduced Mark Berke, reviewed Mr. Berke's diverse judicial experience, and recommended his appointment as Magistrate to the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court.

Mr. Berke thanked Council for their consideration.

MOTION by Boleware, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the appointment of Mark Berke as attorney magistrate for the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Council Member Aldred said he had received an email from Mr. Serpento on Grand Duke regarding a lengthy (10 day) AT&T outage of his landline phone. Council Member Aldred had passed this on to the City Manager, and Mr. Serpento later thanked the City Manager for following up. However, Mr. Serpento is still experiencing poor quality on the phone line; this is something that is affecting an entire area of Farmington and Farmington Hills and is not yet resolved.

City Manager Mekjian said he would be addressing this situation during his report.

Mayor Rich received an email from a resident who had been well-served during a traffic mishap by a Farmington Hills Police Officer.

Mayor Rich acknowledged approximately 200 emails received regarding a request for a proclamation.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION by Bruce, support by Knol, to approve the consent agenda as read.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

22 members of the public addressed City Council, requesting that Council issue a proclamation calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. Speakers who signed up in advance included:

Rania Masri  
Rahaf Khatib  
Asim Khan  
Irfan Shuttari  
Iman Abdalla  
Muhammad Abdallah  
Miriam Dukhan  
Hussnia Peratsakis  
Jennah Peratsakis  
Peter Paratsakis  
Alexandria Peratsakis  
Melina Peratsakis  
Muhamed Halilovic  
Halima Halilovic  
Farah Khan  
Jenna Elewa  
Fareah Fysudeen  
Imam Muhammad Wahaajuddin  
Zainab Ahmed

Those who spoke on other topics included:

George Pager, a paid on-call firefighter for the City, made comments regarding the responsibilities of paid on-call firefighters, 30 of whom lived in the City. Paid on-call firefighters felt their role has been diminishing, to the point that they no longer exist. Consequently, they were in process of joining the same union as the Farmington Hills Police Department, in order to ensure their continued presence and contributions to the City.

Pamela Gerald spoke positively about her experience at the recent Firefighters Ball, and hoped the community will support this event next year and the causes it helps.

As no other members of the public indicated they wished to speak, Mayor Rich closed public comment.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following comments and announcements were made:

- February 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of African American History Month
- Amen-Ra Drummers and Dancers will be performing at The Hawk Black Box on February 25 at 7:00pm.
- Lunar New Year Celebration will be held on February 10 at 6:00pm at The Hawk Black Box
- Indian League of America – Michigan program was held on January 27
- The Do I Still vow renewal will take place on Valentine’s Day, February 14, at 2:00pm at the Longacre House

Mayor Rich will be offering the following opportunities for conversation:

- Feb. 13, noon, Lunch with Seniors at the Costick Center, followed by bingo.
- Feb. 17, 11:00am, coffee hour at The Hawk
- Feb. 20, noon, Walk with the Mayor at The Hawk.

**CITY MANAGER UPDATE**

City Manager Mekjian provided an update on the following:

- Many homes in Farmington Hills have had their home phone service with AT&T impacted by a system outage. Per AT&T, the outage is large and will be protracted, and customers that have been impacted will receive credits to their accounts. For assistance, people can call AT&T at 800-587-2684, which is a dedicated support line.
- February 7, 5:00pm – 7:00pm, SiFi network representatives will be at the Farmington Community Library to share information about the high-speed fiber network being constructed citywide.
- The City will be filling more than 100 seasonal positions with the Public Services and Special Services departments.
- New electronic smart signs have been installed and will be turned on soon.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Boleware, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby confirms the Mayor’s recommendation to appoint the following individuals to various City Boards and Commissions:

**Commission on Children, Youth & Families**

Bria Lewis	<b>Length of Term:</b> Unexpired Term	<b>Term ending:</b> February 1, 2025
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Bria will fill the vacancy left by Jeff Boyle who resigned September 2023.

**Commission on Children, Youth & Families**

Bhumika Mistry	<b>Length of Term:</b> 3 years	<b>Term ending:</b> February 1, 2027
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Bhumika will fill the Alternate vacancy.

**Historic District Commission**

Emily Howard	<b>Length of Term:</b> 3 years	<b>Term ending:</b> February 1, 2027
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Emily will fill the vacancy left by Lisa Martin.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF A 2023 FORD POLICE INTERCEPTOR TO REPLACE TOTALED POLICE FLEET VEHICLE TO LUNGHAMMER FORD IN THE AMOUNT OF \$44,195. CMR 1-24-11**

MOTION by Bruce, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue an amended purchase order to Lunghammer Ford for a 2023 Ford Police Interceptor in the amount of \$44,195.00.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT WITH CHARGE EV, LLC TO PROVIDE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS AT THE HAWK. CMR 1-24-12**

MOTION by Bruce, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to sign the proposed agreement with Charge EV, Inc. to provide electric vehicle charging stations at The Hawk.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

The attorney's report was received.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL TO ENTER INTO A CLOSED SESSION REGARDING PENDING LITIGATIONS UNDER SECTION 8(E) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (REID V CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS, ET AL. AND WESLEY V FARMINGTON HILLS POLICE DEPARTMENT) (NOTE: COUNCIL WILL RETURN TO OPEN SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CLOSED SESSION TO TAKE ACTION IF NEEDED AND TO CLOSE THE MEETING)**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves entering into a closed session, pursuant to Subsections 8(e) and 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, for purposes of discussing and consulting with the City's attorney regarding a privileged attorney-client legal correspondence and the pending court cases of *Reid v City of*

*Farmington Hills, et al.*, U.S. District Court, E.D. Michigan; Case No. 2:23-cv-10164-VAR-JJCG, and *Wesley v Farmington Hills Police Department*, U.S. District Court, E.D. Michigan; Case No. 2:22-cv-12465-LJM-APP, because an open meeting discussion of such matters would have a detrimental financial effect on the litigating position of the City in that case.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**Council entered closed session at 9:18pm.**

**Council entered back into regular session immediately following the closed session at 10:16pm.**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City's Attorney and City Manager to proceed in the manner discussed and recommended in the closed session relative to the case of *Wesley v Farmington Hills Police Department*.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Knol, support by Aldred, to adjourn the regular session City Council meeting at 10:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk