

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL BUDGET STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MAY 15, 2024 – 4:00PM

The special budget study session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 4:05pm.

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

Council Members Absent: Bruce

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Lindahl, Assistant City Manager Mondora, Directors Harvey, Schnackel and Skrobola and Fire Chief Unruh, Police Chief King and City Attorney Joppich

Tom Skrobola, Finance Director, reviewed the budget process. According to the city charter and state law, the budget hearing notice must be provided to the City Clerk by May 29th, with the hearing to be held on June 10th. The charter requires that the budget be adopted no later than the first meeting in June.

The FY 24/25 budget reflects an increase in improvements and new construction, resulting in a 6.5% increase in taxable value. This increase comprises a 6.3% rise in residential, a 4.9% rise in commercial, and a 6.3% rise in industrial property values. He also noted that the decrease in personal property is due to state law phasing out certain elements of personal property, which include business-related equipment and improvements, excluding the actual property itself.

The proposed budget does not reflect any changes in the road millage. Should any changes occur, the budget will be amended accordingly. Under the Economic Development Act, the Economic Development Millage cannot generate more than \$50,000, as stipulated by state law. The expiration dates of various millages impact their listing in the budget, given that some expirations occur before the budget's adoption date each year.

Director Skrobola reviewed the breakdown of tax-based expenditures, highlighting that approximately one-sixth is allocated to the county, one-half to education, and the remaining balance to the city. He pointed out areas where revenue and expenditures varied from previous years. The general fund balance was identified as an area requiring reduction, and he recommended using surplus funds to benefit taxpayers by investing in drainage systems, addressing outstanding capital infrastructure needs, maintaining facilities, and stabilizing general fund support for capital projects.

Additionally, Director Skrobola reviewed the status of other budget areas, specifically Special Services, Roads, Capital Expenditures, Fire, Police, Vehicles, Technology, and Public Facilities.

Council questions, comments and suggestions:

- Council inquired about the 10% drop in commercial property value projected for FY 25/26, specifically asking for the dollar amount of that decrease. Director Skrobola explained that the actual dollar amount of the projected drop in commercial property value for FY 25/26 is calculated to be 10% relative to the actual amount of the previous year.
- Council asked how much the unassigned portion of the General Fund has increased from year to year. Director Skrobola explained that the unassigned portion of the General Fund continues to

increase due to increased revenue. This increased revenue is generated by rising taxable values and interest income.

- Council inquired about the future challenges that might impact maintaining the unassigned portion of the General Fund. Director Skrobola identified several challenges, including the need to maintain aging assets, which encompass facilities, infrastructure, and the fleet.
- Council asked about the accepted unassigned fund balance that Wall Street looks for when maintaining an AAA bond rating. Director Skrobola stated that for an AAA bond rating, an unassigned fund balance above 30-35% is considered outstanding, which would equate to approximately \$25 million.
- Council noted that based on the fund balance, the city is in very good financial shape. They emphasized the importance of ensuring that taxpayer dollars are adequately funding the city's needs and that the community's needs are being met. Director Skrobola responded that one reason for the large fund balance is the influx of federal funds, which supplanted funds originally budgeted for city services such as police and fire.
- Council asked if the fund balance is expected to increase in next year's projection. Director Skrobola explained that the expectation is for the fund balance to decrease in accordance with the submitted fiscal plan. He noted that a series of one-time events have previously benefited the city's revenue, and it is important to budget conservatively as outside funding opportunities come to an end.
- Council inquired about other communities with a similar fund balance. Director Skrobola stated that quite a few communities are experiencing the same situation due to federal funding, increased property values, and higher interest income.
- Council asked if the millage rates for refuse removal (PA 298) are decreasing due to the new vendor contract. Director Skrobola explained that the refuse millage rates are indeed decreasing, partially due to the new vendor contract. Additionally, as property tax values increase and the vendor contract price remains fixed, the community rate is projected to decrease each year.
- Council emphasized that a large percentage of the city's financial revenue comes from residential property taxes. With the strong demand for housing in Farmington Hills, the revenue generated from residential property taxes remains robust. The administration needs to consider funding the delivery of quality services more efficiently. Improving zoning enforcement for both commercial and residential properties is important for an aging community; therefore, this priority should be considered while funding is available.
- The proposed budget does not account for potential grants or other future funding that the city may receive. Council noted that the fund balance at 74% is more than double the benchmark of 33%. Council stressed the importance of ensuring that taxpayer monies are used effectively, recognizing that the current balance is due to one-time external funding, not overcharging taxpayers.
- To maximize grant opportunities for the city, it was recommended to consider hiring a contractual grant writer, which could benefit all city departments.
- Council requested the collection of data to determine the taxpayer benefit of a one-mill reduction.
- Council mentioned that the city of Wixom has introduced a pilot program to recycle food waste for composting. Council is monitoring this initiative to assess the feasibility of implementing a similar program in Farmington Hills.
- Council inquired whether the current budget includes funding for financial software that would enable residents to pay all their city fees through a single account. Director Skrobola responded that this is planned for inclusion in next year's budget. Other technology software programs need to be implemented first; these are included in this year's budget.

Director Skrobola concluded his presentation by emphasizing that the budget presented is intended to allocate funds for proposed projects, but it does not constitute an approval of those projects. If a project is not approved when the contract is brought forward, the budget can be amended accordingly.

City Council reviewed the following budgets with the City Attorney and respective Department Directors, and the following highlights, significant changes in budgets, requests, or amendments were noted:

CITY ATTORNEY

Steve Joppich, City Attorney, affirmed his office's longstanding commitment to the City of Farmington Hills, highlighting that their main office has been in Farmington Hills for over 20 years, and they have recently renewed their lease for an additional seven years. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to represent the city. A significant achievement for the past year was the resolution of the Greenfield class action lawsuit, which was won at the trial court level and upheld by both the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

Council questions, comments and suggestions:

Council inquired about the City Attorney's approach to providing advice during meetings, specifically whether it is their policy to only offer advice when asked a direct question. Attorney Joppich responded that he will offer unsolicited advice if the council appears to be acting in an illegal or unlawful manner. However, council is working through an issue, he will provide assistance as needed. He emphasized that he is cautious about providing unsolicited advice to avoid influencing the council's policy decisions.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Latoya Harvey, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) & Employee Development, had provided a comprehensive presentation at a sub-session.

Council questions, comments and suggestions:

Council inquired whether there was a need for additional staff in the upcoming fiscal year's budget. In response, Directory Harvey indicated that there are no plans to add staff during the upcoming fiscal year. Harvey explained that the decision would be deferred until next year, after the implementation of the strategic plan, which would help to determine the appropriate level of staffing based on the progress towards the outlined goals and initiatives.

SPECIAL SERVICES/PARKS MILLAGE FUND/NUTRITION GRAND FUND/COMMUNITY CENTER RENOVATIONS FUND/RELATED CAPITAL

Ellen Schnackel, Director of Special Services, provided an update on the services delivered over the past year. Director Schnackel reported an increase in programming in profitable areas, higher fees in several areas, including non-resident fees, and a growth in public and private partnerships. The department is exploring the use of external staffing services to reduce expenses. Additionally, they are collaborating with the Communications Department to develop a strategic marketing plan to ensure residents are well-informed about Special Services initiatives. The Department's annual report highlights the accomplishments of the past year, and the department plans to build on their successful areas.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Administration:

- Page 204 should reflect a correction in the Requested Positions. The Recreation Supervisor should be zero, and the Aquatics Coordinator should be 1.

- Council inquired whether these positions were allocated at both The Hawk and the Costick Center. Director Schnackel clarified that the facility supervisor, all aquatic staff, and some building maintenance staff support both facilities.
- In response to questions, Director Schnackel explained that the department collaborates closely with the court district for the community service program. On Saturdays, full-time staff are assigned to oversee the care of court workers. Previously, funding for this initiative came from the administration budget, but it is now sourced from the Parks and Rehabilitation budget.
- Council inquired about potential programs that could generate additional revenue. Director Schnackel noted that although pickleball is very popular, it is not feasible to offer more pickleball times due to space limitations. However, she identified youth basketball as an area that could be expanded, given its increasing popularity. Additionally, there have been requests for a golf simulator and various camps, which could also bring in additional funds.
- On page 26, line 038 indicated a 20% decrease in the request for part-time staffing. Director Schnackel explained that fitness attendants working at The Hawk were reallocated to the recreation department to facilitate easier tracking of expenditures. Additionally, it was acknowledged that the administrative facility has been overstaffed at times, prompting adjustments to staff schedules.
- Mayor Rich noted that during a recent visit to Nissan, there was no information available about Farmington Hills programs and events. She suggested that as the department visits businesses, it would be beneficial to provide their HR departments with program guides so employees can stay informed about what is happening in the city where they work.
- Council requested additional information regarding the fees paid by the City of Farmington to enable their residents to receive Farmington Hills residential rates for programs and services. It was suggested that an analysis be conducted to determine the number of Farmington residents utilizing Farmington Hills services, in order to assess whether an adjustment to the fee amount is warranted.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Senior Services:

- Councilmember Bridges shared a general comment regarding a recent meeting he attended with the Council on Aging. The Council on Aging expressed concerns that renovating the Costick Center would be very expensive and voiced their support for building a new center on the same site, closer to 11 Mile Road. They are opposed to relocating Senior Services to The Hawk due to a variety of reasons. The Council on Aging has requested a study session to discuss the situation with the Mayor and City Manager. Director Schnackel responded that when the initial study and discussions began, there was understandable concern that the Costick Center might be closed. She emphasized that this concern was reasonable, as the department has worked diligently to create a community of individuals who deeply value the facility, its programming, and the services offered there.
- Council inquired whether the usage of the Costick Center by seniors has increased and requested information on the types of programs and activities available at the center. Director Schnackel stated that the Costick Center is highly popular with the senior community. She referenced page 208, which lists the various activities offered by the senior division. She emphasized that there is a diverse range of activities available, with seniors often participating in morning activities, staying for lunch, and engaging in afternoon activities. This is why seniors have expressed concerns about relocating, as they prefer to have all their activities consolidated in one location.-

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Parks:

- Council inquired about any planned expenditures on signage for parks this year. Director Schnackel stated that there is a budget allocated for updating signs. The department aims to be very selective about the content of the signs, avoiding excessive "Do not..." statements, and limiting the quantity of signs. Council noted that the signs at Pioneer Park should be considered for replacement.
- Council inquired about improvements to Heritage Park and whether there was a budget allocated for these enhancements. Director Schnackel stated that funds originally designated under Parks Millage in the Capital Improvement budget have been reallocated to Heritage Park. She also noted that the splash pad is entering its 14th season and other areas of the park's playgrounds require attention. An appropriations request has been submitted to address these needs.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Cultural Arts:

- Page 219 indicates a decrease of seven part-time positions from the previous year. Council asked if this information is accurate, and Director Schnackel responded that she would need to verify this.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Golf:

- Council noted an increase of one full-time laborer. Director Schnackel explained that it has become increasingly difficult to recruit part-time staff, and the golf course requires additional personnel to maintain it. During the golf season, this staff member would be responsible for tasks such as mowing, trimming, and fertilizing. In the off-season, they would handle snow shoveling, sidewalk clearing, and plowing.
- Council inquired whether the use of the golf course has increased over the years. Director Schnackel reported that last year was a record year, with over 50,000 rounds played. She noted that the course has become a significant draw for the city, attracting people from the entire metropolitan area.
- Council inquired about the lease on the restaurant and the need to replace the tables and chairs. Director Schnackel stated that there is a concession agreement with the restaurant, but she would need to verify the length and terms of the lease. She mentioned that the capital request includes funding for tables, chairs, and carpeting, with some of these items budgeted for this year's capital budget and the remainder planned for next year's capital budget.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Recreation:

- On page 229, the department shows a significant increase in total expenditures for Recreation Programs. Director Schnackel explained that this increase is offset by corresponding revenue. As the number of programs expands, expenditures will rise, but this also leads to increased revenue and profit.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Ice Arena Division:

- Page 231 indicates a slight budget increase for an improved sound system. The current system, which dates back to 1985, has prompted complaints from parents who cannot hear announcements clearly.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Parks Millage Fund:

- Page 270 indicates an expenditure \$175K for the dog park. This is incorrect; the expenditure is not for the dog park. Director Skrobola has provided a revised page with the correct information.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Nutrition Grant Fund:

- Council noted that the fund balance is traditionally zero. They also mentioned that this is a wonderful program, highly appreciated by the residents.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Community Center Renovation Fund:

- The council pointed out the absence of a handicapped curbside access to the theater. Director Schnackel responded that there is an ADA line item in the capital funding to address such needs. It was also mentioned that the Arts Commission has discussed the need for benches to assist individuals who need support or are waiting for transportation.

Council questions, comments and suggestions regarding Related Capital:

- The items on page 311 are all millage funded and should be moved from the 404 fund to 410 fund.

FIRE/PUBLIC SAFETY MILLAGE FUND/RELATED CAPITAL

Jon Unruh, Fire Chief, provided a department update, highlighting the significant contributions of his trusted associates, Deputy Fire Chief Jason Olszewski and Fire Marshal Jason Baloga. He noted that both are part of the executive staff and are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the department.

Chief Unruh reported that last year was the busiest year in the department's history, with a total of 12,254 calls. The state of the department is excellent, particularly with the career staff, who have high morale, enjoy their working conditions, and appreciate the new trucks. The 24-hour schedule, implemented about 18 months ago, has been very successful.

On January 6th, the department transitioned Fire Station Three, located at Grand River and Middlebelt, to a 24-hour station. Chief Unruh expressed his gratitude for the council's support in making this change. Another milestone this year was the initiation of EMS services for the city of Farmington on March 15th. Today marks the 60-day milestone of this service. Feedback from both residents and Farmington Public Safety officers has been overwhelmingly positive, with many stating that this change should have been made a long time ago.

Chief Unruh emphasized the department's ongoing efforts to secure grants. Over the past year, the department received a \$10,000 AAA grant for responding to emergencies involving electric vehicles, including fires and crashes. Additionally, the State of Michigan awarded the department a mobile classroom grant worth nearly \$100,000. The most significant grant received was a \$3 million State of Michigan grant for the redesign of the fire headquarters and emergency operations center.

This week, Deputy Chief Olszewski completed a grant application with the State of Michigan for a second set of turnout gear for all career firefighters, with the grant amount expected to be approximately \$250,000. Chief Unruh elaborated on the significance of the grant for a second set of turnout gear, explaining that currently, firefighters have only one set of gear. When this gear gets dirty or contaminated during a fire, it needs to be thoroughly washed and dried before it can be used again. The State of Michigan recognizes the importance of health and safety, thus providing funding for a second set of turnout gear. This allows firefighters to have a clean set ready while the other is being cleaned, ensuring they can continue their duties without interruption.

Chief Unruh highlighted two significant challenges within the department. The paid-on-call program is facing difficulties, primarily due to generational shifts and changes in attitudes towards community

service. In the past, firefighters were more willing to live at the station and respond to calls as needed. Currently, paid-on-call firefighters prefer set shifts, which has impacted recruitment efforts. Despite an intensive recruiting effort each year, the department has seen a decline in new recruits, struggling to attract six new firefighters this year compared to 20-25 in previous years.

Chief Unruh acknowledged that while the program is currently sustainable, it is likely to phase out in the future. The department has discussed this with the finance director and the city manager. As the number of paid-on-call firefighters decreases, the plan is to reallocate the budget to hire more career staff, ensuring the department remains adequately staffed.

Chief Unruh discussed the need to transition Station 4 to a 24/7 career station staffed with career paramedics. Currently, the station is staffed with paid-on-call EMTs in the evenings, who work only three or four days a month, limiting their ability to hone their skills. The department believes that the residents in that area deserve career and highly-trained paramedics.

To compensate for the current staffing, Station 4 is backed up by Stations 1, 2, or 5, depending on the area within Station 4's district. This arrangement pulls resources from other parts of the city, making the operation less efficient.

During discussions, there was concern that there might not be enough funds to add the necessary four paramedics, however, with additional funding from the new EMS service agreement with Farmington, this transition could be achieved at zero additional cost. The revenue from providing EMS services to Farmington will help support this enhancement, ensuring a fifth ALS ambulance is available to Farmington.

Discussion included the need for council to finalize the agreement with Farmington, as an interagency agreement has not yet been adopted or brought before council and an agreement with Farmington needs to be solidified before proceeding with hiring additional full-time firefighters.

Council questions, comments and suggestions:

- Council asked if the fire department was fully staffed. Chief Unruh responded that there are currently three open positions. He explained that the department has always encouraged its paid-on-call staff to advance their careers by becoming paramedics, promising to find them positions within the department. He noted that three individuals are currently finishing paramedic school.
- Council asked Chief Unruh if the zero cost for Station 4 included equipment and capital needs, or if it covered only staff costs. Chief Unruh replied that it referred to zero staff costs, as there were no additional expenses anticipated since the necessary equipment was already in place.
- Council inquired about the expected revenue from the City of Farmington. Chief Unruh stated that Farmington paid a flat fee of \$275,000, and the department is projecting an additional \$300,000 in EMS transport fees, bringing the total expected revenue to \$575,000.
- Council inquired about the number of fires the department responds to. Chief Unruh stated that there is typically one fire per week. This can include house fires or apartment fires. Council noted the benefits of having Advanced Life Support (ALS) services, emphasizing that the advanced licensing helps save lives by providing critical care during emergencies.
- Council inquired if Chief Unruh's vision is to transition from an on-call system to employing only full-time employees (FTEs). Chief Unruh confirmed that this is the goal, but clarified that the transition is planned to take place over the next eight to nine years.

- Council asked where the majority of EMS calls in the city of Farmington originate. Chief Unruh responded that most EMS calls come from assisted living facilities. He mentioned that a study conducted in 2017 revealed that, on average, there is one EMS call per year for each resident in these facilities.
- Council asked City Manager Mekjian if there was a timeline for the negotiation with Farmington. He responded that he would like to have an agreement in place by August.
- Council sought clarification regarding the four additional positions at Fire Station 4, emphasizing that these positions are intended to enhance service for Farmington Hills, not specifically to service Farmington. Chief Unruh confirmed this. Several council members expressed support for approving these four positions, noting that the funds are available in the budget. They stated that even if the agreement with Farmington is not finalized, Farmington Hills residents would still benefit from improved service and protection.
- Council inquired about the types of incidents classified as "other" on page 155, which account for about one-third of the total incidents. Chief Unruh explained that these incidents include lift assists, fire alarms, and similar types of calls.

Council questions, comments and suggestions on the Public Safety Millage:

- Council inquired about the number of firefighters whose salaries are funded by the public safety millage. Chief Unruh responded that the millage funds the salaries of 37 firefighters. Additionally, there are 44 paid-on-call firefighters.

Capital Requests

- A new engine to replace a 15-year-old model
- A utility vehicle to replace a 13-year-old model
- Station furnishings

Council questions, comments and suggestions on Capital Requests:

- Council inquired about the delivery time for the approved new engine. Chief Unruh responded that it takes between 24 and 28 months to build and deliver the engine. The entire department uses Rosenbauer engines because they consistently offer the lowest prices. The department was placed in line for a new engine about 12 months ago. Rosenbauer has agreed to honor their pricing from that time, and if the budget is not approved, they will sell the engine to another buyer.
- Council inquired about how the department discovers grant opportunities. Chief Unruh explained that some opportunities are identified through associations, such as fire chief associations and fire prevention associations. Additionally, elected officials sometimes inform the department about various grant opportunities available at the state level.
- Council inquired whether any additional modifications or furnishings were needed for Station 4. Chief Unruh responded that no additional modifications are required, as the station already has a dormitory and the necessary accoutrements in place. When asked specifically about the need for extra beds or lockers, he confirmed that no extra costs would be incurred, as the station is ready to accommodate the additional four personnel as is.

POLICE/PUBLIC SAFETY MILLAGE FUND/FEDERAL FORFEITURE FUND/STATE FORFEITURE FUND/RELATED CAPITAL

Jeff King, Police Chief, expressed appreciation to Assistant Chief Piggott for his critical role in developing and implementing the primary budget submitted to the city. He also acknowledged the

contributions of several other individuals involved in succession planning, training, and staff development.

The department continues to be recognized annually at state, local, and national levels for its accomplishments, despite facing extremely challenging conditions, including expanding duties beyond traditional law enforcement, increased community engagement, and heightened service demands. Last year, the Farmington Hills Police Department responded to over 54,000 calls for service, marking the busiest year in the city's history. This represents a 22% increase compared to 2022, and a 36% increase over the 2016-2020 average. The department now operates with 114 officers, down from 122 in 2008.

Mental health interventions in 2023 totaled 412, a 2% increase from the previous year and a 249% increase from 2008. Violent crime rose by 3.73%, while property crime decreased by 0.84%. Arrests increased by 75%, and citations rose by 46%. Vehicle pursuits numbered 57, and foot pursuits increased by 30%, totaling 12. There were 67 arrests for carrying concealed weapons (CCW), and assaults on officers increased by 14% last year and 54% since 2020. Year-to-date in 2024, the trend suggests these numbers will match or exceed those of the previous year.

The department faces increased physical and mental trauma incidents, higher performance expectations, and rising scrutiny and accountability. Staffing dynamics have changed, with significant overtime demands. In 2023, officers worked an average of 248 hours of overtime, compared to 113 hours in 2008, with projections indicating 564 hours of overtime per officer this year.

The FY 24/25 budget focuses on enhancing the agency's overall effectiveness and efficiency in various areas, including training, education, crime prevention, investigative capabilities, emergency response, community policing, and public outreach. The budget emphasizes staffing, equipment, and technology to achieve goals related to crime prevention, public safety, and increased transparency. It aims to maintain a superior level of police services, ensuring low crime rates, safety, and a high quality of life in the community, ensuring that the Farmington Hills Police Department can continue to provide exceptional services without partiality or prejudice.

Council questions, comments and suggestions:

- Council inquired about the use of smart policing and data analytics to assist in determining officer deployment. Chief King said the budget includes data analytics provided by the CLEMIS system, which facilitates communication and the sharing of criminal justice information throughout Oakland County.
- Council noted the substantial increase in frequent information requests and asked if the budget includes any additional resources to accommodate this demand. Chief King said that last year the department appointed a coordinator with two FOIA technicians under their supervision. Additionally, the Axon records management system, provided by Council, assists in managing the flow of information to the prosecutor's office and handling FOIA requests and processes. The Axon system has only been in place for a couple of months.
- Council asked if the new system is providing more efficiency. Chief King said that while the new system is expected to improve efficiency, there are initial challenges due to its recent implementation. The department is currently undergoing training and transitioning from the old WatchGuard system to the new Axon system, necessitating the maintenance of both systems during this period, and it is too early to evaluate the system's full effectiveness. The department plans to fully implement the new system and then assess its efficiency moving forward. This assessment is already in progress for next year's budget.

- Council inquired whether the current level of overtime required for the staff is sustainable over a long period and, if not, why additional officers have not been requested. Chief King said the current level of overtime is not sustainable, and additional officers have been requested.
- Council inquired about the recognition of the data analytics issue and asked if there will be a staff person dedicated to this task. Chief King said that while data analytics will be part of the new role being implemented, it will not be filled by a police officer.
- Council noted improvements in the latest transparency data on the department's website, specifically regarding citations. They highlighted that the percentage of citations issued to African Americans has decreased from 65% to about 39%, which is a substantial improvement. Council also inquired about the tracking of traffic warnings and the availability of racial breakdown data for council review. Chief King acknowledged the improvements and explained that collecting this data requires a manual review of about 1,500 pieces of paper each month. To address this, the department is requesting a data analyst. While the primary focus of this position will be on data-driven and intelligence-led policing, it will also support transparency efforts and the development of a public-facing dashboard.
- Council inquired about the specific inputs requested from CLEMIS to disaggregate the data they collect. Chief King explained that the list includes breakdowns based on race, gender, time, date, demographics, location, vehicle stops, and pedestrian stops. When asked if a copy of these inputs could be provided to Council, Chief King confirmed that the general order detailing these requests would be supplied.
- Council asked for thoughts on focusing on serious traffic offenses versus non-serious ones. Chief King explained that the department has always prioritized serious traffic offenses, such as speeding, reckless driving, alcohol-related offenses, marijuana-related offenses, and other violations that cause injury to drivers, pedestrians, and bike riders.
- Chief King responded to a number of questions regarding enforcement patterns and training, and also regarding police involvement in mental health crisis situations.
- Council asked about additional staff and why that addition wasn't reflected in the budget on page 138. Chief King explained that this was a position upgrade. The department promoted a crime prevention technician from a full-time staff member to a data analyst. This new position will have a higher salary and be classified as a general employee.
- Council asked if converting a current staff member into a data analyst would be sufficient to answer questions about proper personnel deployment and if additional staff were necessary. Chief King emphasized that the new data analyst position would be critical for analyzing data and making recommendations, but ultimately, the decisions on deployment would be made by the department. He highlighted the need for the right person to perform data analytics and transparency dashboard tasks, integrating with the CLEMIS system. Additionally, \$35,000 has been allocated for technology support for this position, recognizing the specialized skills required. CLEMIS is expected to re-evaluate, redesign, and implement these systems. Chief King clarified that the position is currently vacant, and a new person with a new job description would be hired. The resignation of the previous individual created this opportunity, allowing the department to upgrade the position while being fiscally responsible.
- Council voiced concerns that, based on the data presented in the introductory presentation, there may be a need for additional staffing. The City Manager recommended that the Finance Director and the Police Chief review the budget needs and return tomorrow with a proposal if the data supports additional staffing.
- Council inquired about the number of school liaison officers (SLOs) and the funding breakdown. They asked for clarification on how many officers there are, the financial contributions from the school, and the city's involvement. Chief King explained that the school district pays \$100,000

for three SLOs. Their primary assignment is at the schools, and any overtime for events outside the school day is paid by Farmington.

- Council inquired about the entry for "001 - Gas and Oil" on page 142, noting that it shows a zero value. Chief King explained that when preparing the budget, certain items like gas and oil, rental equipment, fleet insurance, and vehicle maintenance are provided to Finance. Council noted the presence of several zeros in the budget and recommended checking for errors.
- Council referred to page 146, which shows key departmental trends, and requested data on domestic violence (DV). Chief King noted that DV is a complicated crime and that complaints are often retracted during the course of an investigation.
- Council asked if the department is fully staffed with dispatchers. Chief King confirmed that they were fully staffed. The dispatchers have been on 12-hour shifts for a year and a half, and it is going well.

Federal and State Forfeiture Funds

Council noted that there are \$544,000 in state forfeiture funds. Chief King explained that to comply with federal law, forfeiture funds cannot supplant the budget but must supplement it. The department tries to integrate these funds accordingly. Recently, significant state funds were used to build the communications center, nearly exhausting the state fund, although it is beginning to build up again.

The federal forfeiture fund typically pays between \$100,000 and \$200,000, depending on needs. This year, \$100,000 from federal forfeiture funds has been allocated for education and training, specifically for PIT (Precision Immobilization Technique) training for sworn staff. This technique involves using a police car to spin out a suspect's vehicle to terminate a pursuit before it becomes too dangerous.

The department aggressively pursues grant funding to supplement their budget. The department initially budgeted \$100,000 for PIT training but also applied for a federal grant, receiving \$65,000, which helps offset the need for the full \$100,000 initially allocated. Over the past four years, the police department has secured over \$700,000 in grants, including funding for body cameras, mental health training, and reimbursement for officers attending the academy.

Capital Requests

- K9 Team Expansion – Discussion included the request for two additional dogs, bringing the K9 Team to three members. All K9 dogs are patrol-rated first, focusing on tracking (e.g., missing children, elderly adults, suspects), and then receive specialized training. The current K9 dog specializes in explosives detection, while the new request is for two narcotics detection dogs. A K9 dog's life cycle is approximately nine years. The budget cost includes both the dogs and vehicle outfitting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The special budget study session adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk

