

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
CITY HALL - COMMUNITY ROOM
JULY 25, 2022 – 6:30PM

The study session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Barnett at 6:36pm.

Council Members Present: Barnett, Boleware, Bruce, Knol Massey and Newlin (arrived at 6:38pm)

Council Members Absent: Bridges

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Valentine, Directors Monico and Randle and City Attorney Joppich

DISCUSSION OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF POLICE DEPARTMENT TRAINING AND POLICE DEPARTMENT TRANSPARENCY DASHBOARD

City Manager Mekjian explained that City Council directed staff to have an independent legal review conducted of the Police Department situational awareness training following an incident regarding shooting range targets. City staff has researched the issue and will discuss those findings and are seeking further City Council input.

Mr. Mekjian stated that in researching third party firms to conduct a legal review Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, LLC was suggested as a reputable firm as well as Winbourne who was suggested by the city's auditors as a company with expertise in the field that could also provide an analysis of the traffic stops and citations and arrests from the transparency dashboard data. In an effort to move forward expeditiously on this matter, City Manager Mekjian noted that two items were placed on the regular meeting agenda this evening; 1) To authorize Miller Canfield to conduct a legal review and 2) An agreement with Winbourne for up to three different phases of review that included an analysis of the situational awareness training, traffic stops and citations and arrest analysis. It would be at the Council's discretion on which phases of the analysis they wished to approve. Mr. Mekjian added that Miller Canfield also may have a subject matter expert that potentially could provide review of the dashboard data.

Attorney Joppich introduced Michelle Crockett from Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, LLC noting that he met Michelle at a conference and her biography was very impressive and on point for the legal review the city was requesting as well as from a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) standpoint.

Attorney Crockett reviewed the scope of the legal review that would include review of legal standards and analysis of risks and liability, if any, with respect to using the targets mentioned and potentially working with Winbourne or another consultant as part of the legal analysis. She added that regardless of the findings, her firm would provide some recommendations, implications and things to consider both from an internal perspective and community perspective.

Council inquired if other communities had taken up such a review with regard to their situational training and if they approved working with Miller, Canfield would the firm be working with Darlene King, the City's DEI Consultant.

Attorney Crockett responded other communities have not taken on a review that was as focused on a specific practice or procedure but there have been reviews through a DEI lens. She added that if her firm is hired, she would be working with Ms. King as the city's DEI consultant.

Discussion was held on what the legal review would entail and if it would provide information the city could use to take back to other agencies that may consider what the city is doing as best practices and suggest improvements. Michelle said that potentially that would be the case but she could not answer that completely without the full review; however, the city would have an opportunity to see what is considered best practices and also consider if that is how you want to move forward as a city, if so.

Kelly Monico, Director of Central Services, explained Winbourne's background and expertise in the field and explained the analysis they would be providing included a purposeful look at the culture of the training and not just the training itself and conducting full fact-finding with layers of information to compare local practices to both national and international practices.

Council commented on the accreditation standards and that it would be interesting to see if they overlap with those compared by Winbourne. Director Monico pointed out that standards change all of the time and through the lens of a DEI focus, accreditation standards could also change with the next review.

Mayor Barnett stated she would prefer a comprehensive study and to authorize the legal review and all three phases of review by Winbourne.

Council concerns and suggestions included:

- The cost of all reviews
- That the county should provide further data points as the entity collecting this data for communities.
- The city is not required to have a transparency dashboard but is providing this information to be more transparent but the raw data without context could put communities at risk
- Suggested researching grant opportunities to help fund the analysis of the data
- Suggested building the city's own database and potentially using ARP funding and having a third party audit of the data
- The fact that it was not just about the data and perceived perception of the data but the need to remove that disparity of what the data appears to show
- Concern that every time DEI efforts are discussed, the budget or costs are a concern
- Unsure that Winbourne has the expertise with regard to situational awareness training
- Comment that this is an investment in the city and if the city needs to house its own data to get the data points they need, then the city should find the funding to do so and then make that information available to the public

Mayor Barnett summarized that Council seemed to have further questions on the analysis of the situational awareness training and transparency dashboard data and suggested moving forward with the legal review from Miller Canfield at the regular meeting and holding off on moving forward with the 3-phase review by Winbourne.

Further discussion was held on the potential of writing a grant and reviewing other funding options including federal or state funding or through universities.

It was by a couple of members that the city should manage their own data so they have the statistics they need to provide to the public.

Mayor Barnett confirmed that Council was not ready to act on the agreement with Winbourne for the 3 phase study but would like to move forward with the legal review by Miller Canfield at the regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk