

**JOINT MEETING  
OF THE  
FARMINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL  
Dunckel Middle School  
32800 Twelve Mile Road  
Farmington Hills, Michigan**

**May 3, 2011**

A joint meeting of the Farmington Public Schools Board of Education, the Farmington City Council, and the Farmington Hills City Council was held on Tuesday, May 3, at Dunckel Middle School, 32800 Twelve Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan. The meeting was hosted by Farmington Public Schools.

**FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:** Howard Wallach, president; Debby Brauer, secretary; Karen Bolsen, treasurer; Frank Reid

Absent: Sheilah Clay, vice president; Priscilla Brouillette, Tim Devine

**FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS REPRESENTATIVES:** Diane Bauman, director of school and community relations services; Cheryl Cannon, executive director of operational services; Michele Harmala, executive director of support services; Debbie Higgins, executive assistant to the Board of Education; David Ruhland, assistant superintendent of human resources and legal services; Sue Zurvalec, superintendent

**CITY OF FARMINGTON COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Tom Buck, mayor; Mike Wiggins, mayor pro tem; Valerie Knol; JoAnne McShane; David Wright

**CITY OF FARMINGTON REPRESENTATIVES:** Vince Pastue, city manager; Sue Halberstadt, city clerk

**FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Jerry Ellis, mayor; Michael Bridges, mayor pro tem; Nancy Bates; Barry Brickner; Randy Bruce; Ken Massey; Cheryl Oliverio

**FARMINGTON HILLS CITY REPRESENTATIVES:** Kevin Bersche, deputy fire chief; Steve Brock, city manager; Kathy Dornan, city clerk; Dana Winnery, assistant city manager

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Members of the press and public.

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.** President Wallach called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm and asked participants to introduce themselves.

2. **COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS**

- **Setting the Stage.** Superintendent Zurvalec began by referencing last year's joint meeting (June 29, 2010) which was facilitated by Leslie Knopp of Traverse Management. The meeting focused on collaboration and the discussion centered around what we as community leaders have in common, what we value (e.g., quality education, safe vibrant neighborhoods, inclusion and diversity, etc.), and challenges/concerns (e.g., community involvement/engagement, stability of funding sources and burden on community, economic limitations, etc.). As an outcome of the meeting, the Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force was formed. Its members - Tom Buck, Randy Bruce, and Frank Reid - agreed to provide leadership and meet to review ideas and develop options for the full group's consideration.
- **Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force.** Frank Reid provided an update on the work of the Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force which, as noted above, was formed as a result of the June 29, 2010 annual joint meeting. He presented a PowerPoint which included information on the history of the task force, shared services/initiatives currently in place (e.g., After School Youth Centers, Turn Around Awards Program, Pledge for Success initiative, etc.) and guiding principles. Mr. Reid also reviewed priorities and discussed the benefits, roadblocks, and next steps with regard to each. They include, but are not limited to: energy/diesel fuel bulk purchase, shared health care/retirement, and public safety/dispatch consolidation.

There was brief discussion. It was suggested that the District look into MITN (Michigan Intergovernmental Network) for purchasing commodities. MITN is a group of agencies that joined forces to create a Regional Bid Notification System which notifies companies of new bid opportunities.

- **Farmington Hills 2020 Visioning Process.** Steve Brock provided an update on the Farmington Hills 2020 Visioning Process, a strategic visioning plan intended to move the city forward into 2020 and beyond; to make the city more viable, more livable. Five subcommittees were formed with an initial kickoff in January of 2011. They are: education/jobs, redevelopment/economics, transportation/energy, taxes/services, and activities/citizen retention. The committees were charged to bring back their reports to the City Council in October. The reports will then be transfused into one document by the end of the year. City Manager Brock noted that at some point, there will be opportunity for the public to weigh in.
- **Identification of Common Concerns for Legislative Consideration.** Dr. Michele Harmala explained the facilitation process and purpose of the group activity which was designed to have participants (1) identify common concerns, (2) brainstorm potential actions, and (3) determine next steps which could then be referred back to the Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force.

Dr. Harmala then reviewed the norms for effective groups; there was consensus.

Each group (four) was instructed to select a timekeeper, task master, and a reporter; Dr. Harmala explained the role of each. The groups were then charged with generating a list of legislative concerns or issues for legislative consideration, clustering like ideas, categorizing them, and reporting out.

The groups reported out the following “broad” themes: labor relations, inadequate funding, barriers to cooperation, PA 106 (Public Employees Retirement Association), education reform, quality of life, politics, drug law reform, human rights legislation, and miscellaneous. Participants posted their areas of concern under these broad themes. They then were instructed to identify the areas of most importance to them. They were funding, labor relations, barriers to cooperation, and education reform.

In the next step of the process, groups were allotted 15-20 minutes to brainstorm potential actions within the top themes identified. Dr. Harmala reminded the group that the purpose of the brainstorming session was to generate ideas to provide a starting point for further discussion. They reported out as follows:

**Category: Funding**

Can't raid K-12, Proposal A must change, modify Headlee, align budget years, local control, lobby, resolutions, meet with legislators/Governor, cooperate, work together to identify legislation that we support and lobby for, take proactive approach, tax pensions, raise local taxes, lobby on tax reform by increasing taxes, hold public forums, appoint representatives from each jurisdiction to meet quarterly with legislators, work with state lobbying organizations, report back publicly to each board/council, develop common goals, focus on reforming (Proposal A) and revenue sharing, communicate-communicate-communicate

**Category: Labor Relations**

Act 312, tenure reform, PERA (Public Employees Retirement Association) reform, Section 106 health care reform, change the laws, communicate with state lobbying organizations, develop common advocacy talking points, meet with local editorial boards, write letters to legislators, encourage public engagement, educate legislators

**Category: Barriers to Cooperation**

Carrot/stick approach - reward good performance and penalize those who don't participate, must legislate regional transportation, costs (need to address them), develop list of barriers and take to Lansing, reform Urban Act, PERA, hold joint public forums

### **Category: Education Reform**

Streamline bargaining process, create strike reform, work towards improved accountability, tenure, Proposal A, municipalities to join school districts to lobby for pension/retirement reform, funding and tenure, work with legislators, be a seat at the table, work with lobbying groups, hold public forums with seniors and other groups, work with unions, advocate for change, involve the state board of education

Dr. Harmala thanked the groups for reporting out and stated that next steps will be to determine if any of these action items go forward; and, if so, how (e.g., Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force)?

### **3. UPDATES**

- **CPR Training.** Farmington Hills City Council Member Ken Massey discussed the need for teaching cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the schools and making it a graduation requirement. Councilman Brickner suggested adding CPR training as a community service requirement. Superintendent Zurvalec suggested the issue be referred to the Joint Inter-Governmental Task Force, of which she has participated on, for further study. She noted concern about whether the training could be added as a requirement within the Michigan Merit high school graduation requirements and that a pilot program be explored, in cooperation with the cities.
- **Suicide Prevention Initiative Update.** Council Member Nancy Bates provided statistical information on the suicide rate noting that according to the Surgeon General, it is a national epidemic and the third leading cause of death in children. She asked city leaders to take action on suicide prevention, particularly in teens, and provide students and parents with the critical information they need about when, how and where to get help. She called for a community meeting to address this important issue. President Wallach indicated that the District would provide the location if Council Member Bates would identify a date for such a public meeting.

It was noted that Council Members Bates, Massey and Bruce have organized a Suicide Prevention Task Force of which Farmington High Assistant Principal Bob Crawford and Farmington Board of Education Vice President Sheilah Clay are members. Superintendent Zurvalec suggested a planning meeting involving the Farmington PTA Council.

- **Site Demolitions.** Cheryl Cannon provided an update on the school sites that the District closed last year as approved by the Board of Education on February 24, 2010 (William Grace, Wooddale, Eagle, and Flanders elementaries. Maxfield Training Center is scheduled to be closed at the end of this school year.). She noted that bids have been received for asbestos abatement and demolition of the sites. A contract for abatement is expected to be awarded by the end of June. A contractor will then come in after July 5, so as not to conflict with city baseball leagues, to demolish the schools.

Mrs. Cannon indicated that after the sites are demolished, the footings and foundations will be removed, the sites will be graded and seeded, they will be maintained with grass cutting, and the playgrounds will be studied for right-sizing. The current plan is to leave the sites as playgrounds and ball diamonds until the economy turns around, at which time they could be sold. There was brief discussion; Mrs. Cannon responded to questions.

Deputy Chief Bersche discussed asbestos abatement and training. He reported that tactical trainings by the Farmington Hills Police Department have taken place at Fairview Early Childhood Center and joint training exercises with the Police Department will also be conducted at Flanders Elementary. In addition, Special Operations/Rescue teams from Oakland and Wayne counties will be involved in similar training operations.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** None.
5. **ADJOURNMENT.** President Wallach adjourned the May 3, 2011 Joint Meeting at 9:02 pm.

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J.T. (Tom) Buck, Mayor

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Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: June 6, 2011

Minutes were recorded and transcribed by Farmington Public Schools.