

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, February 18, 2008, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Mayor Knol.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buck, Knol, McShane, Wright.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Wiggins.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue.

01-08-019 MOTION by McShane, seconded by Wright, to approve the agenda as amended, moving Public Comment to Item No. 3 and moving Commission on Aging up to Item No. 2. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSION ON AGING

Present: Lew Cantor, Chair, and Mary DiManno, Senior Division Liaison

Mr. Cantor shared his enthusiasm for work that has been done through the Commission for seniors in the community. He outlined the two primary goals of the Commission: (1) Directory maintenance; noting with increased interest ad space is sold to offset the cost and, (2) Project Healthy Living, averaging approximately 170 in attendance, giving free or low cost health exams to any person 18 years of age and older.

Councilmember McShane commented how the communities would benefit from knowing senior programs are offered to age 50 and over. Ms. DiManno agreed stating their efforts to educate the public in that regard didn't seem to improve participation.

Mayor Knol felt residents over age 50 were not taking advantage of the senior programs due to working fulltime.

Ms. DiManno and Mr. Cantor agreed and stated that currently the Commission is primarily helping the disenfranchised seniors with the 50-60 year olds being in the minority.

Mr. Cantor addressed the topics of real estate fraud and identity theft discussing the Oakland County flyer promoted by the Commission.

Councilmember Wright asked if the Commission provided income tax preparation assistance. Ms. Dimanno stated AARP is offering tax assistance at the Senior Center free of charge.

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Councilmember Wright commented how seniors receiving Social Security need to file a return due to the recent changes in the income tax refund law. Ms. Dimanno noted AARP has volunteered to head up a program to educate seniors regarding income tax law.

Mr. Cantor explained the Commission had increased involvement in consumer protection by conducting joint seminars with the Commission on Emergency Preparedness and the Senior Division. He also described Table Talk (a.k.a. Problem Solvers) where seniors can meet with two members of the Commission on Aging to address issues of concern.

Mr. Cantor discussed a new initiative, "Get out the Vote", providing education on the importance of voting.

Councilmember McShane asked if Absentee Voter Ballot information would be included in this initiative. Mr. Cantor answered yes.

Mayor Knol asked if the Commission worked with the Committee to Increase Voter Participation from the City of Farmington Hills. She stated their primary purpose is to encourage voter participation. She noted the Commission on Children, Youth and Families educates residents on the importance of registering to vote at age 18. Mr. Cantor wasn't familiar with the Committee to Increase Voter Participation but was very interested in working with them.

Mr. Cantor described a second new initiative as a state funded program, "Community for a Lifetime," promoting City activists who help make the City more comfortable from cradle to grave.

Councilmember McShane explained this initiative fits together well with the City's goal of educating seniors on the importance of a changing and growing community. She felt there needed to be a vehicle created for open dialogue and a greater understanding between the senior population and the City. She commented on how the evolution of a City affects its residents.

Mayor Knol felt regardless of where you live or the issues being faced there are always people who are resistant to change.

Mr. Cantor explained the Commission's approach to this issue. He noted there is a ten-point plan that creates a community "elder friendly." He stated Commission volunteers will research the effectiveness of the community on each point, including conducting surveys. He stated the Commission would assess sample surveys to determine if a survey is feasible.

Mr. Cantor stated that with access to resources such as City employees and the Walkability Committee they can get answers regarding infrastructure and walkability of the community.

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Mayor Knol noted Councilmember Wright is a member of the Walkability Committee.

Mr. Cantor reviewed future projects and events asking for nominations for the Awards Presentation to be held April 17, 2008 and promotion of the Project Healthy Living to be held April 18, 2008.

The Council commended Mr. Cantor and Ms. DiManno on a job well done, stating the Commission on Aging and the Senior Center make a great team.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None were heard.

COUNCIL COMMENT

City Manager Pastue stated his intent to recommend in the regular meeting the adoption of a new resolution reducing the dollar amount of the Grand River Streetscape & Grove Street Improvement Project from \$3.3 million to \$3.2 million and the scope of the work by eliminating the water line component.

Mayor Knol requested Bond Counsel thoroughly review all legalities of the resolution for residents. City Manager Pastue agreed.

Councilmember McShane questioned when a copy of the Walkability & Parking Study would be made available. Pastue commented no written report has been presented. He noted recommendations were given at a public presentation given by Dave Cornwell last October.

Councilmember Wright remembered changes in signage were addressed at the October meeting. Pastue agreed and explained the recommendation was to complete the crosswalk at State Street and Farmington Road. He expected to receive a report shortly.

Responding to a question by Councilmember McShane, Councilmember Buck gave a status report regarding the Branding Study, noting the public survey posted on the website and the Council's participation in it. He stated there were approximately 365 survey participants and noted he is waiting for the interviews from outside businesses to be processed. He felt it may be at least 3-4 weeks until a draft report is issued.

Mayor Knol asked if the draft would be received by the end of March. Buck responded yes and felt it was going a little slower than hoped. He further reported difficulty getting the business responses back in a timely fashion.

ADJOURNMENT

01-08-020 MOTION by Wright, seconded by McShane, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Valerie S. Knol, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

Susan Pohto, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: March 17, 2008