

Farmington Hills City Manager Resignation (or Termination?) January 2026

T.R. Carr, Ph.D.

Public Administration and Policy



FACULTY POSITIONS

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
University of Arkansas
Texas Tech University

INTERNATIONAL LECTURES

Russia · Finland · Latvia · Germany
New Zealand · French Micronesia (Tahiti)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Mayor, Hazelwood, MO
- President, St. Louis County Municipal League
- Chairman, MO Municipal League Policy Committee
- Vice President, St. Louis County Police Board
- President, St. Louis County Fire Standards Board
- Ferguson Commission (Gubernatorial Appointment)
- Leadership Circle St. Louis RCGA
- VP St. Louis Automotive Partnership
- Chairman SSM Hospital Advisory Board
- VP Economic Development Corp (FH)

MISSION & VISION

Of Seeing Clearly With T.R. Carr



MISSION

Civic Clarity

Delivering clear, accurate, and accessible information about local government to residents.

VISION

An Informed Community

A public that understands, questions, and participates in local governance.

CORE VALUES

Integrity

Transparency

Inclusivity

Innovation



REASON FOR THIS PRESENTATION IS TO PRESENT

“

Just the facts.

Just the facts.

— *Officer Friday, Dragnet*

This presentation is grounded in documented records.

CITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The Council's Direct Authority



CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYS EXACTLY 2 PEOPLE

City Manager

City Clerk

COUNCIL POWERS OVER THESE EMPLOYEES

HIRE

City Council holds full authority to select and appoint both direct employees.

TERMINATE

Nonfeasance

Failure to perform required duties

Malfeasance

Misconduct or wrongful acts in office

At Will (Political Decision)

Without cause, at Council's discretion



TIMELINE OF EVENTS SURROUNDING DEPARTURE OF FARMINGTON HILLS CITY MANAGER (December 2025 – January 2026)



DECEMBER 2025

The Meeting That Wasn't — and the One That Was



DEC 17

Mayor calls an
unscheduled
City Council
meeting for
Dec 19
(Evaluation – Termination)



5 Council Members

Were informed of the purpose of the special meeting



2 Council Members

Were NOT initially informed of the purpose of the special meeting



City Manager

Was NOT initially informed – later informed by City Attorney
(City Manager Then Sought Personal Legal Representation)

Meeting rescheduled to Wednesday, January 7, 2026

JANUARY 7, 2026 (Wednesday)

Special City Council Meeting — What Happened Behind Closed Doors



01

Closed Executive Session

The meeting was held in closed session — shielded from public view under executive privilege.

02

Unequal Legal Representation

City Manager was denied the right to have his personal legal counsel present. City Council had the City Attorney in the room.

03

Outcome Announced

City Council emerged to announce — by a 4–3 vote — that the City Manager would be resigning effective February 2026.

PROVISIONS OF THE SEPARATION AGREEMENT



FINANCIAL PAYMENT TO CITY MANAGER

~\$350,000

Total settlement: Unused Vacation Pay,
Unused Sick Leave, One Year of Salary, One Year
of Family Health Insurance (Cobra) and his
Attorney Fees

Paid from public tax dollars

NON-DISCLOSURE PROVISION

Agreement Included

Reasons for separation are
sealed from public record

Citizens cannot know reasons why !

March 9, 2026

Mayor issued a formal Proclamation of Appreciation
to the departing City Manager — after signing a non-disclosure agreement.

IRONIC COMMUNICATION STATEMENT (PARTIAL)



Mayor of Farmington Hills · February 10, 2026 · Proclamation

WHEREAS, The role of government communications professionals is to inform, educate, and engage their communities.

WHEREAS, Robust communication in government creates trust and inspires residents to take action and be involved.

WHEREAS, Government communications create relationships and calls to action, build awareness and understanding through storytelling, engage and foster engagement on civic issues, and use all channels to include people in critical decisions.

NDA's & TRANSPARENCY

Legal does not always mean ethical — or transparent



LEGAL?

Yes.

Non-Disclosure Agreements in public employee separation packages are permissible under Michigan law.

ETHICAL?

Debatable.

Public officials are stewards of taxpayer resources. When they seal the reasons for a \$350K payout, citizens lose the ability to evaluate their leadership.

TRANSPARENT?

No.

Transparency requires that the public can know what happened and why. An NDA forecloses that possibility by design.

Can citizens know the reasons for a \$350,000 taxpayer-funded settlement? Should they?



LEARN MORE & TAKE ACTION

Seeing Clearly With T.R. Carr

SeeingClearlywithTRCarr.com



Attend Council meetings. Read the minutes.
Know city council members, write letters and speak at council meetings.
Personal relationship with council members.

WHAT ARE OUR OBLIGATIONS AS CITIZENS?

*Informed citizens are the
foundation of accountable
local government.*

— T.R. Carr, Ph.D.

Stay Informed · Ask Questions · Show Up