

REGULAR WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021
6:00 P.M.

The Regular Work Session of the City Council of the City of Vineland was called to order by the President, Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur.

The following members were present at roll call:

Councilman David Acosta
Councilman Paul F. Spinelli
Councilman Albert Vargas
President Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur

Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr. was absent.

Also present were: Michael Benson, Esq., Associate Solicitor
Greg Gallo, Business Administrator Staff
Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety
Ryan Headley, Planning Division

President Arthur led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Municipal Clerk stated Public Notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, has been given on December 8, 2020 by the City Clerk in the following manner:

1. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board in the lobby of the City Hall;
2. Providing written notice to the offices of The Daily Journal and The Press of Atlantic City;
3. Filing written notice in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Vineland.

President Arthur asked if anyone from the public would like to comment.

Steve Lewis stated that the Memorial Day parade was top-notch. He complimented Director Alicea for his work in organizing it. Unfortunately, only a small number of people observed the parade from Landis Avenue. He also shared photographs from the front of a physician's office on Landis Avenue across the street from NJ State Senator Mike Testa's office. The front window of the doctor's office has a sign for medical cannabis. Mr. Lewis does not believe this is the image we want for Vineland, and he warned about problems should recreational cannabis be permitted in Vineland.

Ryan Headley, from the Planning Division, was present and provided an overview the recommended amendments to the signage ordinance. The current ordinance lacked control and regulation of digital signs. The amendments include adding definitions, regulating the brightness of the digital signs, regulating the length a message can stay on the screen, prohibits 'distracting' images, etc.

There being no one further to be heard, the Clerk reviewed the agenda.

Council members wished clarification on the new position of Legal Department Investigator, specifically, is it full or part-time? Specifically, what types of investigations will this person undertake?

There was a question about the resolution establishing Juneteenth as a holiday in Vineland. It follows the State legislation signed by Governor Murphy. For Vineland, the annual holiday will be the third Friday of June.

There was some discussion about the process and procedure for tomorrow's special meeting about the recreational cannabis issue. The Clerk outlined that the various options were presented at the last work session, and tomorrow's session will give the opportunity to ask questions. Solicitor Benson explained that there are three basic options. A.) Permit recreational cannabis licenses in Vineland; B.) Prohibit them; C.) Do nothing, in which case all options will be permitted. The Clerk further advised that the public must be afforded an opportunity to address City Council, as they are at all meetings except closed sessions. He advised City Council to adhere to their by-laws and limit speakers to one visit to the podium, and no more than 5 minutes. It is unknown if there will be any public input. If City Council is of the mind to reject the concept, it's best to make that known so time isn't wasted formulating intricacies of a draft ordinance.

Councilman Vargas reported that the PAL and the Vineland Police Department are sponsoring their Youth Fishing Derby Saturday. He thanked all the city employees who assisted to work on improving Landis Park, and he expects the Mothers' Garden to be ready in September. He also advised that some of the Landis Avenue flags need to be replaced, especially before an event like the Memorial Day parade.

Councilman Spinelli reiterated some of the points made by Councilman Vargas. He noted attending the Hero Foundation dinner with Councilman Vargas and was proud that Vineland's hero vehicle design was by far the best. He also noted visiting the Egg Harbor Township PAL. The director there is a retired police officer who is paid, but everyone else involved is a volunteer, including great support from the police. The kids select the subjects and activities they undertake, like robotics. Overall it is a very successful program, with no municipal tax funds used to support it.

President Arthur announced that the Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, June 15 concerning recreational cannabis.

Director Alicea commented that the city did a great job getting Landis Park ready for the Memorial Day ceremony. He said that while the parade attendance was poor, it can be viewed as a starting point for improvement. The aircraft fly overs were perfect. The veteran banners continue to be a tremendous success, as we install more each week.

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The Clerk reminded Council members about the special meeting tomorrow at 6:30 p.m., and the fact that next week's pre-meeting conference and regular meeting will be conducted on Monday, June 7 beginning at 6:00 p.m. New Jersey's Primary Election is on Tuesday, June 8.

The President entertained a motion by Councilman Acosta, and seconded by Councilman Spinelli, to adjourn the meeting. The Clerk called the roll: YEAS: Councilman Acosta
Councilman Spinelli
Councilman Vargas
President Arthur

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President of Council

ATTEST:

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk