

REGULAR WORK SESSION
& QUARTERLY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022
5:30 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 (*arrived at 5:55 p.m.*)
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr. (*arrived at 5:39 p.m.*)
Councilman Paul F. Spinelli
Councilman Albert Vargas
President Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur

Also present were:

Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor
Robert E. Dickenson, Jr., Business Administrator
Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety
Macleod Carre, Director, Health Department
Robert Dickinson, Health Officer

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 15, 2021 by the City Clerk in the following manner:

1. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board in the lobby of the City Hall on;
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.

Note: The original date for the Quarterly Board of Health meeting was January 4, 2022, but it was postponed until this date, with notice provided to newspapers and posted on January 25, 2022.

President Arthur entertained a motion by Councilman Spinelli, and seconded by Councilman Vargas, to approve the minutes from the Board of Health meetings conducted on July 6 and October 5, 2021.

The Clerk called the roll: YEAS: Councilman Franceschini
Councilman Spinelli
Councilman Vargas
President Arthur

Department of Health Director Macleod Carre gave a brief update on Health Department personnel, noting the promotion of the deputy registrar to registrar, and the upcoming appointments of a new deputy and alternate deputy registrars.

Health Officer Robert Dickinson reviewed the Covid-19 statistics for Vineland. For ages 5-12, 64% of Vineland's population is fully vaccinated. For ages 12-18, 70% have been fully vaccinated. For those 18 and older, 87% are fully vaccinated. 47% of Vineland eligible residents have received recommended boosters or third doses. Over the past four months the Vineland positive case counts were:

Oct. 2021: 465 Nov. 2021: 424 Dec. 2021: 1,742 Jan. 2022 (through Jan. 28): 3,581

244 Vineland residents have died from Covid-19. Over the past four months the death totals are:

Oct. 2021: 13 Nov. 2021: 7 Dec. 2021: 10 Jan. 2022 (through Jan. 28): 13

He explained that the United States is getting closer to adopting a strategy similar to that of Singapore that moves from zero tolerance to learning to live with Covid-19, and using resources to slow transmission and keep people from becoming severely ill or hospitalized. Also, universal case investigation and contact tracing is ending for a variety of reasons. The new Omicron BA.2 variant is now confirmed in 40 countries around the world and in 30 U.S. states. It is 50% more easily transmissible than the first Omicron variant, but the symptoms appear to be less severe than those caused by the delta variant. The Vineland Health Department health educator resigned in November. There is a replacement from within the department with proper credentials, but experience is lacking. Food safety courses are resuming. In October, November and December 76 food workers attended the classes. The 2022 waiting list already contains approximately 120 names. These classes are now conducted at the Vineland Public Library, which seems to be an ideal location. The Health Officer is recommending that the dog/cat licensing period be amended to March 1 through the last day of February annually. There are several reasons for this recommendation and the concept has the endorsement of the Director of Licenses & Inspections.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Health, President Arthur entertained a motion by Councilman Spinelli, and seconded by Councilman Acosta to adjourn the quarterly Board of Health meeting.

The Clerk called the roll: YEAS: Councilman Acosta
Councilman Franceschini
Councilman Spinelli
Councilman Vargas
President Arthur

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

Steve Lewis proposed a moratorium on cannabis businesses. He stated that the property approved for a use variance by the Zoning Board of Adjustment is not serviced with public sewer by the LSA. According to Mr. Lewis' research, the existing medical cannabis facility generates approximately 2,000 gallons of effluent each day. He also suggests overview of the cannabis issue by the Environmental Commission, OSHA, the Fire Department and the Police Department.

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Councilman Acosta noted that a correction on his name needs to be made in the draft of minutes for the January 18 special meeting to correct a typographical error.

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

Councilman Spinelli requested that Administrator Dickenson invite Fire Chief Luigi Tramontana to a meeting of City Council to explain the battalion line chiefs concept under discussion.

Solicitor Tonetta provided a brief overview of the various classes of cannabis licensing from the state. Class I (cultivation) will permit 37 licenses statewide. In our ordinance we have no limit. We also have no limit on Class II, Class III, Class IV and Class VI licenses. For Class V (retailer) we currently have a 1 license limit. It was discussed that having no limits may not be best. City Council recommended that the Solicitor prepare a draft ordinance to have a limit of two licenses in each class. The Solicitor reported that the city is getting approximately \$10,000 per month from the medical cannabis facility.

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

Councilman Acosta
Councilman Franceschini
Councilman Spinelli
Councilman Vargas
President Arthur

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President of Council

ATTEST:

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk