

REGULAR WORK SESSION
& QUARTERLY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2023
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 5:38 p.m.*)
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr.
Councilman Paul F. Spinelli
President Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur

Councilman Albert Vargas was absent.

Also present were: Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor
 Robert E. Dickenson, Jr., Business Administrator
 Macleod Carre, Director, Health Department
 Robert Dickinson, Health Officer
 H. James Neher, Director of Public Works

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 13, 2022 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.

President Arthur entertained a motion by Councilman Franceschini, and seconded by Councilman Spinelli, to approve the minutes from the Board of Health meetings conducted on July 5, 2023.

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

President Arthur indicated that the city is earning additional points toward the Sustainable NJ recognition by virtue of our Board of Health. We currently have the bronze designation, but the committee is working to improve to the silver status of Sustainable NJ recognition.

Director Macleod Carre provided a reporting of the Health Department staffing. He noted that there were two REHS resignations at the end of August. Interviews to fill those positions are planned shortly. The department is now down to five REHS employees, plus the Chief REHS. The director reported on continuing cooperation with the SJ Aids Alliance, noting additional STD clinics under consideration. He also advised that the Covid-19 situation is at a confusing crossroads. With the 'emergency' designation lifted, we now have to pay for the vaccines, which cost approximately \$107 per dose. There are also delays in obtaining the vaccines. The department plans to schedule one vaccination clinic before the end of the year, which will likely be limited to only approximately 300 doses, because of the cost. Councilman Franceschini suggested that the city partner with physicians or the hospital to provide more clinics with vaccines.

Health Officer Dickinson explained some of the confusion relating to the new monoclonal mRNA vaccines. The commercialization has escalated the cost, as noted by the Director. The department is also trying to analyze how the city may be able to charge insurance companies for reimbursement for vaccines administered at clinics. At present it is not clear how this all will work. He announced grant funding to expand Get Real High School and Teen Outreach pregnancy prevention program curricula to include teens ages 14-19. The program currently serves only middle school students. He concluded his report indicating the mayor's approval for the Health Department to oversee the management of the opiate settlement funding. Their plan is to utilize the funding to expand the Municipal Alliance program.

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

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

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

Timothy Bonjean and Karen Ferrari presented their concerns about the unsafe traffic conditions on Panther Road, seeking a reduced speed limit for this road, and consideration of a four-way stop sign at the Panther Road and Dante Avenue intersection. The current speed limit is 45 mph, but drivers typically are traveling 55 to 60 mph. They testified witnessing many accidents, and argued that the farming community uses slow moving vehicles in conflict with speeding vehicles. They recommended lowering the speed limit by 10 mph. Council members concurred that these observations are correct, and they indicated support for a reduced speed limit.

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

Councilman Franceschini stated that the Health Department should present their quarterly report in different, more engaging manner. He also urged that they should create an alliance with physicians for Covid-19 vaccinations.

Councilman Spinelli summarized some of the upcoming VDID events, including the volunteer appreciation dinner; the pumpkin patch event; and the upcoming Old Fashioned Christmas activities. He also reminded colleagues about the mayor's event at St. Augustine Prep coming up soon.

Councilman Acosta attested to the traffic issues on Panther Road, as delineated tonight. He said the city needs to address this concern.

President Arthur reminded everyone about the dedication of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way next Wednesday.

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
President Arthur

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President of Council

ATTEST:

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk