

REGULAR WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023
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 Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr.
Councilman Paul F. Spinelli
Councilman Albert Vargas
President Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur

Councilman David Acosta was absent.

Also present were: Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor
Robert E. Dickenson, Jr., Business Administrator
Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety
H. James Neher, Director of Public Works

The President 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;
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.

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

John Pedersen, Ellen Pedersen, and Nora Zielinski were scheduled and present to report to City Council in their request seeking endorsement for certification of Vineland as a Certified Community Wildlife Habitat from the National Wildlife Federation. The NWF contacted the Vineland Environmental Commission to ascertain interest in Vineland becoming certified.

The Commission approved the formation of the Natural Vineland Committee to proceed with the certification. They believe our community could enhance and restore islands and corridors of wildlife habitat in both the urban and suburban areas of our community for the benefit of all citizens. Vineland is already 'registered' and the Natural Vineland Committee is attempting to seek certification, which is a point based process.

So far 33 gardens are included in the inventory. City Council endorsement will provide additional points toward the effort. The concept is to promote gardens that benefit wildlife and people, using practices that provide natural sources of the four elements of habitat: food, water, cover, and raising young. A key component is to promote the use of native plants in gardens and landscaping. Over 240 cities, towns, counties, and neighborhoods across the country are certified. Vineland would be the first in Cumberland County. President Arthur thanked the group for their presentation and handouts, and stated that the governing body would review and consider the request.

Steve Lewis, Vineland. He references a program in Downe Township for land preservation and that program decreased ratables. It was explained to Mr. Lewis that any endorsement for the Community Wildlife Habitat program provides no funding for real estate purchases.

Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety. Mr. Alicea reported that the plans for the Memorial Day parade are on track. He noted that so far, 153 banners have been installed on Landis Avenue honoring veterans. He also reported that the Vineland Police Department currently has eleven recruits attending academies.

There being no further comment from the public, the Clerk reviewed the agenda.

Councilman Franceschini questioned if City Hall has a generator to supply power in the event of a power outage. Apparently there is a generator in the basement of the building but it is uncertain if it is in working order. The matter will be further explored with Utilities Director John Lillie.

Mr. Franceschini also reported that there were 89 positive Covid-19 cases in the month of April, and only one so far, for May. The number is down substantially, but he noted many cases are not reported and there are still deaths. He also noted an increase in applications for food truck permits.

Councilman Vargas reported that the Recreation Commission recognized mini wrestlers at their recent meeting. The Commission also presented a certificate to the Kates family acknowledging the contributions of the late boxer, Richie Kates. Work continues on projects at the Memorial School fields. The community pool still has only one lifeguard. The Pagliughi Park courts have been repaved. PAL is looking for boxing coaches.

Councilman Spinelli questioned technology systems used by the various departments. It was noted that some are department-specific. He also inquired why termite inspections are required for demolitions. Apparently demolitions do require termites and rodents to be eradicated so they don't spread to other areas. He also referenced the request by VHS students in Albert Porter's class to remember Martin Luther King, Jr. by dedicating Plum Street in his honor. Clarification is needed to find out what portion of Plum Street they have in mind.

President Arthur wants to get moving with the mobile home park committee. Solicitor Tonetta recommends 2 Council members (President Arthur and Councilman Franceschini volunteered), a representative from mobile home park homeowners' associations, and Mr. Chapman.

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President Arthur stated that students from Rossi School are scheduled to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at next week's Council meeting.

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

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President of Council

ATTEST:

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk