

REGULAR WORK SESSION  
& QUARTERLY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
TUESDAY JULY 18, 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 David Acosta.  
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr.  
Councilman Paul F. Spinelli  
President Elizabeth A. Arthur.

Councilman Albert Vargas was absent.

Also present were:           Edwin Alicea, Acting Mayor, Director of Public Safety  
Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor  
Greg Gallo, Business Administration  
H. James Neher, Director of Public Works

President Dr. Arthur led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy 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.

Deputy City Clerk Franchetta introduced Joseph Henry from Hardenbergh Insurance Agency who presented the governing body with a presentation and handout on Avoiding Complacency & Managing Risk on behalf of the City's Joint Insurance Fund.

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

Steve Lewis from Vineland followed up on questions he asked City Council in the last work session concerning the SPCA. Solicitor Tonetta responded that he forwarded those questions and some other over to Director of the SPCA, Ms. Morrison. Two main concerns asked were as to whether the billing procedure was based upon population vs. usage of the facility and the ability to have a seat at the SPCA board of trustees since Vineland, and other municipalities are footing the bill. Mr. Lewis also asked if they would break down the charges when received. Tonetta mentioned the bill is broken down to sheltering and veterinarian charges for medical treatment. Tonetta spoke briefly on the matter and issues of animal control, the City's position and options. The actual average cost per animal is \$345 dollars. SPCA total operating cost is \$1.7 million. Of that, \$1,138,000 being salaries and wages. The average employee is paid \$28,600.00. Ms. Morrison responded to Solicitor Tonetta via email in an unprofessional tone. Council discussed and Tonetta stated he will respond accordingly.

Chris Wilson from Vineland spoke to Council about the community's children and the community pool. Unfortunately, he stated it is mid-July and the pool remains closed. Everyone has been working diligently since last summer however the pool is still closed. This is one of the hottest summers on record with no cooling centers or pools to help cool the kids. He did mention many have done a lot to get the pool ready. Councilman Franceschini interjected stating the issue is lifeguard staffing. Only one lifeguard applied and was hired. However, the City pool requires two guards. Wilson suggested the one guard who applied and was hired by the City relied to his detriment on the City to open the pool. Therefore, the guard should be compensated as he was hired, and was available to Vineland to get the pool open which amounts to three weeks' worth of pay. Also, Sabater Pool could've been used as an alternate had it been maintained over the course of twelve months. Wilson argued the mental health of our children is very important. He argued that these pools may be an outlet or a deterrent against the negative activities children may encounter. He said the community is offended the pool is not open. Additionally, a checklist was provided by the Health Department back in April which still has not been approved. The Governing Body agreed the pool needs to be opened. Solicitor Tonetta advised he will look into the checklist with the Health Department and reach back out to Mr. Wilson.

Tracy Wilson from Vineland also wished to speak about the pool issue. She mentioned many inter-city children do not have access to many mainstream things citizens do because they live well below the poverty level. She stated the lack of urgency is offensive to the community and it needs to bare some weight. There is an expectation the governing body is going to do everything it can to support everyone in the community. The community is not feeling they are a priority at all. The opening of the pool must be a priority and made an urgent issue so it is opened before the summer is over. She ended with, "our children deserve better."

With no one else to be heard, the Deputy City Clerk reviewed the Agenda.

Councilman Franceschini updated that seven new Automated External Defibrillators have been distributed to the Recreation Division and will be placed in the fields where needed. He asked if the City had any cooling centers open due to the heat. Richard Franchetta, speaking as the Fire Director stated that would be a question for OEM and he will inquire with OEM Coordinator Lou Tramontana and report back what we are do in that situation.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023

Councilman Spinelli stated this week begins movie night which will be a movie shown outdoors on City property where the old police station stood. It is free to the public. This is a series of movies that will be held for the citizens of Vineland. Also, the summer concert series begins with a tribute band of the Eagles at Giampeitro Park on June 22, beginning at 7 P.M. Kaycee Ray's is having battle of the bands for the month of July where the winner goes on to perform in another City and wins a prize. The Food Truck festival is coming up in August. Serene Custard is hosting many fundraising events in getting people to frequent the establishment to enjoy the taste of summer and some miniature golf. Spinelli also thanked those who publically spoke tonight on the issue of the community pool. The reality is there is no reason the Health Dept. should not have everything completed for the opening.

Councilman Acosta noted the Planning Board met last week hearing many petitions for growth in the City, one of which he was most impressed with was Chem Glass Realty which will add a 32,000 square foot industrial building to the industrial park. All Kids First wishes to add on to their business and also changes to the golf course of NEP Realty mostly concerning seclusion walls and their height. Councilman Acosta mentioned the contentious situation with the Carl Arthur Center and the Boys and Girls Club. He questioned the original purpose and intent of the center when it was built. Ultimately it was determined that it is the City Administration issue. President Dr. Arthur mentioned she discussed with Solicitor Tonetta and that they are going to bring all parties to the table to try to find an amical solution. She stated one program should complement the other and they should be able to work together.

Acting Mayor, Director Alicea mentioned Puerto Rican week begins this Sunday with a flag raising at City Hall at 1:00 P.M. culminating with a parade next Sunday with a Parade. He also noted that seven officers graduated from Gloucester County Police Academy this week and another three from the Atlantic County Police Academy are to graduate in about a month. There will also be a swearing in of new officers this Friday morning at 9:00 A.M.

President Dr. Arthur thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers on their recent family challenge and mentioned to keep each other in prayer and to hug your children for you shall never know when your day may be the last on Earth.

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

Councilman Acosta  
Councilman Franceschini  
Councilman Spinelli  
President Dr. Arthur

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

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Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur  
President of Council

ATTEST:

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Richard G. Franchetta, RMC, EJD  
Deputy Municipal Clerk