

WORK SESSION
MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 2024
6:00 P.M.

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

Councilman David Acosta was absent.
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr. was absent.

Also present were: Robert E. Dickenson, Jr., Business Administrator
Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor
Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety
H. James Neher, Director of Public Works
Maryanne Wolf, Clerk's Office Legal Secretary
Sheena Santiago, Special Events Coordinator (*arrived at 6:20 p.m.*)

The Vice President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk stated Public Notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, has been given on December 13, 2023 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; and;
3. Filing written notice in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Vineland.

The President asked if there was anyone in the audience who wished to be heard.

Steve Lewis referenced a recent motion referring the topic of the proposed harm reduction center to the Planning Board. He wondered why a resolution was not adopted. Solicitor Tonetta explained the procedure, such as this one, that requires land use board involvement prior to the governing body taking any action. Mr. Lewis also referenced Congressman Van Drew's proposal to set aside July 22 to honor military support industries, which he believes to be a good idea.

The President introduced Paul Forlenza, Executive Director for the Trico JIF; Dave DeWeese, Solicitor fo the JIF; and Chris Powell of Hardenburgh Insurance. Mr. Forlenza guided City Council through a prepared, printed presentation outlining considerations relating to the joint insurance fund. He noted some new exposures and new challenges, including a 54% increase in property insurance premiums, a 9.3% increase in medical cost inflation over the past 3 years, and a 16.7% increase in the last 3 years for wage replacement. He pointed to a worldwide insurance crisis affecting all insurance companies and JIFs, whether personal or commercial. The presentation described 28 separate \$1 billion property loss evens in the United States in 2023, attributed to global warming and increasing natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, fires). He explained that JIF budget increases are being driven by the Municipal Excess Liability (MEL) and re-insurance market that dictate a large portion of the budget. He explained the strong financial position of the Trico JIF, and stated that Vineland's dividends exceed \$73,000 for this year and will continue to increase. Mr. Forlenza spent a little time explaining how to judge a JIF and what "red" flags should be analyzed. He also presented an overview of safety/risk management training, including NJ Environmental JIF; EPL/POL risk management programs to reduce claims; EPL helpline and cyber risk support. He highlighted the JIF T.U.L.I.P. coverage, claims management, and the wellness program. Council members thanked the Trico JIF representatives for their presentation.

The President welcomed Mike Zumpino and Melissa Walsh, from Triad Associates, Aaron Melnick, our community development coordinator, and Anne M. Bergamo from the Community Development Advisory Committee. Mr. Zumpino provided a brief 50-year retrospective of the Community Development Block Grant program, and he complimented this City Council and all predecessors for embracing the program. Ms. Bergamo spoke of the challenges facing the committee, as funds continue to diminish, yet needs enlarge. For Federal Fiscal Year 2024 the budget is just less than \$500,000. The committee evaluated the applications from public service organizations and offered their recommendations. Councilman Vargas asked if the organizations are monitored. It was explained that they are monitored through their application, documentations, site visits and allocation reviews. The next step is for City Council to adopt a resolution authorizing the committee's recommendations. Council members thanked the committee, staff and consultants for their presentation.

The Clerk reviewed the agenda.

The President asked if any Council members wished to be heard.

Councilman Vargas reported that the Recreation Commission meets on Wednesday. He inquired about the status of the animal shelter issue. Solicitor Tonetta stated that we are still awaiting the report from the consultant. Councilman Vargas also asked about the flooding issue on Brewster Road. Solicitor Tonetta responded that the County is working on the matter, with the easement to be established first.

Councilman Spinelli stated that VDID work is progressing with the Old Fashioned Christmas event. The food truck festival is in September, and the karaoke event is at the Landis Theater on September 6.

President Arthur noted that National Night Out, scheduled for tomorrow, has been cancelled due to the forecast of rain. The 'Movie Under the Stars' event planned for Friday evening has also been canceled because the ground will be wet, even if the rain stops. Dr. Arthur inquired as to the status of Jake's Park. Administrator Dickenson advised that it is going out to bid. Dr. Arthur referenced another recent email from the Vineland African American Community Development

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Corporation. Administrator Dickenson responded that he will again attempt to set up a meeting with all involved. Dr. Arthur also asked for an update on the Fiorilli Senior Citizen Center. Administrator Dickenson responded that work is moving along.

Dr. Arthur advised her colleagues and staff that the administrator of the South Jersey AIDS Alliance has agreed to come to the City Council work session scheduled for Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

There being no further comments to be heard, the President entertained a motion by Councilman Spinelli, and seconded by Councilman Vargas, to adjourn the meeting.

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

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President

ATTEST:

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk