

REGULAR WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018
6:00 P.M.

The Regular Work Session of the City Council of the City of Vineland was called to order by the President, Paul F. Spinelli.

The following members were present at roll call:

Councilman David Acosta
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr.
Councilman Albert Vargas
President Paul F. Spinelli

Councilwoman Angela Calakos was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Anthony R. Fanucci
Richard P. Tonetta, Esq., City Solicitor
Greg Gallo, Business Administrator's Office
Susan M. Baldosaro, Chief Financial Officer
Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety

President Spinelli 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, 2017 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 and Mrs. Spinelli treated Council members and guests with a sandwich tray, side dishes, cupcakes and beverages.

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

Cindy Webber reviewed the programs and activities of the Vineland Public Library. She claimed the proposed budget cuts will harm the library and negatively impact the community. She stated the proposed cuts amount to 37% of the library's budget.

Brandi Grosso, Vineland Public Library Director. She read a statement from Victor Druziako, president of the Board of Trustees, who was unable to attend tonight. The statement dealt with the proposed budget reductions. The statement noted that expenses will be streamlined. They are also interested in pursuing a higher level of local municipal taxation support by referendum. A restructuring committee has been formed by the Board of Trustees to consider financial implications.

Helen Cowan-Magiotti, Vineland Public Library employee. She summarized the value of the library to the community.

Terry Carpenter, Vineland Public Library employee. As a former employee of the Bridgeton Public Library, she related how similar budget reductions had a negative impact on that facility.

Dr. William Hartman noted that a career day is planned at Mennies School and inquired if Council members might be interested in participating. He left copies of an informational sheet with Council members. He also added supporting comments on the library issue.

Mike Ruccolo shared a story about an incident he had at the library and claimed that the staff and Mr. Druziako did not handle the situation to his liking. He claims the library has no accountability and it is not well run.

Tony Centeno raised the issue of the library ignoring and fighting the proposal by consulting firm LS&S to find cost savings.

Steve Lewis suggested that the library ask patrons who use the facility for money. He also suggested the library establish a "go fund me" effort.

Councilman Franceschini noted that three Council members previously served on the Vineland Board of Education, so they understand and value the importance of education and libraries. He wondered if grants are being explored and welcomed the concept of regular reports from the library to the governing body.

Solicitor Tonetta explained that there is a mechanism to increase the tax levy for the public library. A referendum could be placed on the ballot, either by resolution of the governing body, or by initiative.

President Spinelli added that assistance for the referendum could be obtained from the Solicitor and the Municipal Clerk. He emphasized that it is a dollars-and-cents decision, noting that other departments were also confronted with budget reductions. He added that while we are making strides with economic development, we are still facing the repercussions from the revaluation from several years ago.

TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018

Mayor Fanucci offered the services of the city's grant writer, Triad Associates, to the library. He commented that \$100,000,000 was lost in ratables due to the revaluation. He added that the library's budget reduction is not a political whim, but part of our mandate to prepare a legal balanced budget. He stated that these issues should not become public relations battles. Mayor Fanucci left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

President Spinelli invited the Community Development Advisory Committee to present their Community Development Block Grant recommendations. Mike Zumpino and Alex Curio from Triad Associates, Committee Chair Anne Bergamo, Vice Chair Dr. William Hartman, Dr. Charles Valentine and staff member Ken Heather were present. Mr. Zumpino explained that this is the 44th year for Vineland's participation, and how the funding has dropped dramatically over the ensuing years. There have been four public hearings to date, leading up to tonight's presentation of recommendations. The final decision lies with the Mayor and City Council, but past practice has been that the recommendations from the committee are authorized by the governing body. Chair Anne Bergamo acknowledged and thanked her committee, adding that although federal funding has diminished, the program funding has been used to leverage other types of funding. Fifteen percent of the recommendations are reserved for public services. This is a mechanism for local social service organizations to respond to an RFP and request funding. The committee tries to accommodate as much as possible, but they do weigh the amount requested against the perceived need and the impact. Other funding is for residential rehabilitation and clearance activities to fight blight. Mr. Zumpino stated that a resolution will need to be adopted, likely the last meeting in May, or the first meeting of June. The resolution must incorporate a public hearing before its adoption.

The Municipal Clerk reviewed the agenda.

Councilman Vargas noted the annual Vineland Police Department sponsored youth fishing tournament at South Vineland Park on June 2. He also announced the upcoming Law Enforcement Memorial ceremony to be conducted on Monday, May 14 in front of the Vineland Police headquarters on Sixth Street.

Councilman Franceschini reported that he will be City Council's liaison with Inspira. He also reported attending the Emergency Management conference in Atlantic City this week.

Councilman Acosta announced that Vineland High School graduate Jamil Demby was drafted by the NFL Los Angeles Rams. Mr. Demby's great-grandfather was a pioneer Hispanic retail merchant in Vineland. A commending resolution for Mr. Demby should be considered by City Council.

Public Safety Director Alicea advised Council that the family of Mr. Burton is pleased that his name is on the memorial in Landis Park.

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

Councilman Acosta
Councilman Franceschini
Councilman Vargas
President Spinelli

ATTEST:

Paul F. Spinelli
President of Council

Keith Petrosky, RMC
Municipal Clerk