

SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2021
5:00 P.M.

The Special Meeting 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:

Councilwoman Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
Councilman Ronald J. Franceschini, Jr.
Councilman Albert Vargas
President Paul F. Spinelli

Councilman David Acosta was absent.

Also present were: Anthony R. Fanucci, Mayor
 Greg Gallo, Administration
 Susan M. Baldosaro, Chief Financial Officer
 Edwin Alicea, Director of Public Safety
 Kathleen Hicks, Supervising Planner

The President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy Clerk stated Public Notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, has been given on June 15, 2021 by the Deputy 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.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION:

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

There being no one to be heard, President Dr. Arthur acknowledged Mayor Anthony R. Fanucci who introduced Bill Caruso, Esq. who the Mayor recommended to Dr. Arthur to come share some knowledge and the law firm to which he works. Mr Caruso represents a medical marijuana company and answered questions City Council had in regards to upcoming legislation.

Mr. Caruso Esq. addressed Council and gave some background credentials as he is an attorney with Archer and has a phenomenal relationship with the City and was privileged to speak in a volunteer capacity. Mr. Caruso worked on Cannabis policy both on the federal and state level.

He explained the City will have medical and adult use cannabis living side by side in our state in harmony whether one wants it or not. Changes in insurance coverage are now visible on the medical side. They are also providing subsidies for such. There is an explosion of product development on the medical side. Transdermal patches and development of those pharmaceutical products are now being developed.

Local approval is something the City is contemplating now. In monitoring progress, Caruso does not see any adult use operable until the 4th quarter of 2021. Mr. Caruso spoke about the Micro business program in NJ being a small resident program carved into the statute.

Mr. Caruso fielded questions by Councilman Franceschini who asked if more research was conducted in pharmaceutical field as there is in medical marijuana as it works with other medications. Caruso stated more universities are doing more research. There is profound research showing profound medical use in various areas. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is testing blood. Other countries have done significant medical research showing pain management. Better outcomes, cheaper outcomes, better health outcomes relating to pain managements. Controlling of seizures; new research to opioid treatment as a stepdown for addiction. The insurance lobbyists are come into play as they are now looking at workman's comp coverage; insurance coverage both at the public and private sectors. Generally, insurance companies are exploring healthcare coverage.

Franceschini ask if companies working in cannabis have qualified people working for them to give advice and also what stops the average person to bypass the medical marijuana prescription front and go right to the adult use whereby the employees tells the customer to take this stuff and go bake some cookies and see how it works for you. Caruso said yes, there might be those that do not want to register for the State program. The hope here in all this is we take away the stigma so that when they have a conversation with their doctor, they recommend it to their patients.

Councilman Spinelli asked where the Micro class business falls into all this. Caruso stated they are unsure what the Micro rules are going to look like however he said the City wouldn't be locked into anything. The City could always expand.

Franceschini brought up School and our youth and education. Has the Dept of Education had conversation on how they will handle? Caruso stated the DOE has not weighed in. This an adult use (21 and over) program and there are very stringent requirements on the user. As adult use goes up, teen usage goes down because it is no longer cool any longer and more difficult to get. It dries up the black market. The goal in all this is getting it off the street, drying up the black market and putting it behind a store counter.

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Insurance coverages have gone up in adult usage areas. Caruso believes NJ will see an increase in auto insurance premiums and then the market will take over and it will level out.

Dr. Arthur is under the guise there is no meter or gauge to detect levels of influence and asked how will one determine who is under the influence? Caruso stated there is a wholesale change in how we view 'impairment' generally. Impairment is subjective. The test for impairment is very simple right now. Trained law enforcement are trained for impairment. The problem is cannabis can stay in a user's system for weeks. One can take a blood test and it shows not impairment but that one has used it in the past. If the person cannot pass a drug field sobriety test with trained recognition drug officer, with no scientific way measure someone.

Body cam and dash cam video coupled with field sobriety test, and a blood test. for the near future, these 3 factors or a 3 part test will be what is admissible in court for impairment reasons.

Vineland has the opportunity to build a manufacturing base out of this. These are sophisticated medical products.

It was a pleasure to be in front of Council and said he is willing to help however he can.

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

There being no council members to be heard, the President entertained a motion by Councilman Spinelli, and seconded by Councilman Franceschini, to adjourn the meeting.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:57P.M.

ATTEST:

Dr. Elizabeth A. Arthur
President of Council

Richard G. Franchetta, EJD
Deputy Municipal Clerk