

March 9, 2021

Regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens, held on March 9, 2021.

Mayor Holeman called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of Our Country.
Please remain standing for a moment of silence for our military.

This meeting has been advertised in one newspaper, the Daily Record, in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act.

ATTENDANCE: Councilwoman Cheatham, Councilman Glass, Councilwoman Hedgepath, Councilwoman White, Councilwoman Garcia Montes.

ABSENT: Councilman Lorenzo.

** Attorney Feintuch was also present at this meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes of February 23, 2021 as received by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

JOAN CEGELKA - I received an email from Joan today. She wanted to know if the Council had anything in place so that residents could attend the meetings virtually. If Council is opposed to this, please explain.

I told Joan that Council is not opposed to it but they have no way to have meetings virtually.

LETTER FROM ATTORNEY FEINTUCH - Debbie sent me various items. A lot of it has to do with updating fees. There is a lot that needs to be addressed besides fees. There is a lot of stuff in here that is outdated.

A careful analysis of the current Borough Code clearly shows it to be outdated and includes language that is not applicable to Victory Gardens. This comment is limited to the chapter that I worked on. I am certain that there are numerous other chapters that are not relevant to the Borough and/or are difficult to understand. The changes recommended were essentially an increase in fees. The increases seem to be arbitrarily arrived at and in many cases are not relevant to the Boroughs geography or its buildings. I know the Council was reluctant to revise the code book. However, I believe that the code book requires a complete re write. It requires more than just adding the new ordinances adopted over the past several years.

Every section of this book needs to be updated with the help of whatever professionals we have to look at their sections.

We need to have the construction officials get input on to what should be removed. We could probably have a code book that is half the size.

NCURISH.NJ - I gave everyone a copy of the packet of information I received from this company. They want to buy the ShowPlace property. I did explain to them that they have to come before the Planning Board for their approval.

The Clerk said everyone has a copy of their paperwork. I think it is a great thing.

NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES - I gave everyone a copy of this newsletter from NJLM. Guidance on Cannabis Legalization.

The Mayor asked Council what do they want to do about updating the code book? When do you want to start on that? Councilwoman Montes said she believes it needs to be updated. Every committee needs to look at the book and take care of their part. Construction already looked at it.

Motion to accept the correspondence as received by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

VOUCHER REPORTS

Date of Council Meeting:
March 9, 2021

<u>Voucher #</u>	<u>Payable to:</u>	<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3/1/2021	Advance Auto Parts	Streets & Roads	22.44
3/2/2021	Dover Court	Court shared services	1,623.36
3/3/2021	Dover Water Commission	Utilities & Fire OE	145.39
3/4/2021	Morris County MUA	Streets & Roads	29.25
3/5/2021	NJNG - Fire	Fire OE	185.00
3/6/2021	New Jersey Advance Media	Clerk OE	1.55
3/7/2021	Postmaster General - Dover	Clerk OE	330.00
3/8/2021	Protective Measures Security & Fire System: Bldgs. & Grnds.		174.50
3/9/2021	R & L DataCenters, Inc.	Finance OE	250.00
3/10/2021	Rockaway Auto Resources, LLC	Streets & Roads	210.43
3/11/2021	Verizon - #1 - 263-0001-56	Utilities	72.97
3/12/2021	Verizon - #3 - 366-7536	Utilities	66.94
3/13/2021	State of NJ - Dept. of Treasury	Group Ins.	5,794.88
		TOTAL	8,906.71

Mayor Holeman asked the Council if they had any questions on the vouchers? Hearing none, he asked for a motion to pay the bills.

Motion to approve the vouchers for payment by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	Yes
Councilwoman Hedgepath	Yes
Councilwoman White	Yes
Councilwoman Garcia Montes	Yes

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION OF SEWER ORDINANCE - The Clerk said she has to read this by title only.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE SEWER RATE SCHEDULE
FOR THE BOROUGH OF VICTORY GARDENS

The Clerk said that now you have to open to the public on the ordinance only.

Motion was made to open the meeting to the public on the ordinance only. Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Jim Janone - Our rates went down. Joe said we need the revenue. I don't see why this has to be raised your rates went down. School taxes are going up. County is staying flat. We have never owed more than we collected for sewer. If you could say to me that rates have to go up because our rates went up - then its justified. To hit people with an increase now with the pandemic isn't right. According to our ordinance you can only raise rates 10% and that would be \$19. Maybe you should raise commercial and leave residential alone. That wouldn't be fair the Clerk said. Then you are penalizing the commercial.

No other comments from the public. The Mayor asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. Motion to close by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Councilwoman Montes asked what the new rate would be? The Mayor said it 's going from \$190 a year to \$210 a year. Councilwoman Montes said it shouldn't be raised. Councilwoman Cheatham agreed that it should not be raised.

Councilman Glass made a motion for the increase. We have discussed this in the past and everyone agreed to this increase. We lowered it from what we were going to raise it and the whole Council agreed. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath. Roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	No
Councilman Glass	Yes
Councilwoman Hedgepath	Yes
Councilwoman White	Yes
Councilwoman Garcia Montes	No

The Clerk said the ordinance was adopted.

Motion was made to open the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham and approved on verbal vote. None opposed

Jim Janone - Everyone that voted yes on the sewer increase should be embarrassed by your vote. The Mayor said that is your opinion Jim. In reference to the code book, the land use should be done also. It is all in the code book. The garbage bid that was put out. If something is very specific in the bid is the contractor and the Borough suppose to live by it. The Attorney said the bid speaks for itself. The pickup time is supposed to be 7 a.m. to 10:00 am. My garbage is picked up at 4 am. Did you ever get an update on the EMS billing? I haven't heard from the Chief yet. He said he would get back to me. The Mayor and I met with the new Business Administrator. Based on the calls that Dover does we should be getting about \$20,000 from them. We would only get paid if they billed our residents through insurance. Those are the figures I am waiting for the Clerk said. Who is the 3rd person on the Committee for Victory Gardens? The Clerk said Councilwoman Hedgepath agreed to do that for us. What is the update on the schools? We aren't paying them right now. We are holding monies. What were you talking about with the Showplace? Can you go into a little more detail. NOURISH.NJ is the name of the company that wants to come in. I hope they are not a nonprofit. They are but I have a letter from them saying they will pay the taxes. I also never heard anything about the vacant lot the Borough has. Did anyone ask Leon about it? I did the Clerk said, it is a buildable lot from a zoning perspective.

Terry Connolly from NutrishNJ - Where do you operate out of now? In Morristown. Our plan is to build a headquarters right here in Victory Gardens. We do a lot of work with Dover and the Dover school system. This is a great locations. We are privately funded. Each year we raise about 2 million dollars. We have a capital campaign going right now and we have raised 2.8 million so far. Our goal is 5.3 million. How much staff do you have? 16 intotal. There is 7 full time and the rest are part time. Will you be hiring some of our residents? Yes, if they apply. If there is a need in the community we serve them. We currently serve Morristown, Dover, Parsippany. Are you only in Morris County? Yes, right now that is what we do but in the future we hope to expand. We help with mental health, rent, bills, we try to partner. We also deal with addiction. Everything we do is free. There is no income guidelines. We have our own preventive measures for housing and homelessness. We have employment programs. We have health services. We work with the hospital and with Zufall. We are very flexible. How long have you been in existence? 34 years. The Clerk asked if they did their paperwork for Planning Board? Our attorney is working that with the Clerk right now.

Motion to close the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Submitted By:

Deborah Evans

Deborah Evans
Borough Clerk