

February 28, 2023

Regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens, held on February 28, 2023.

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, Councilman Hale, Councilman Lorenzo, Councilwoman Garcia Montes.

ABSENT: Attorney Feintuch

Motion to accept the minutes of February 14, 2023 as received by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilman Lorenzo and approved on verbal vote.
Councilwoman Hedgepath abstained as she was not present for the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Clerk said there was nothing for correspondence. There is one thing I wanted to mention to Council. Over at 19 Coolidge there is a car that has been parked there for months - in the street. I sent a letter to the home owner and he came in and said the car isn't his. It has been sitting there for months and he asked that we have it removed. I called the State Police with the license plate and they said they can't run them anymore. He told me to send a letter to the owner. I told him I couldn't do that until I know who the owner is. I asked Dover court to run the plate and they said they can't do it anymore. The police told me the only way we will get the cars off the street is if we get a towing company in here to tow them at owners expense. We have other cars on streets in here.

The Mayor said to get in touch with the Sheriffs office. Councilwoman Cheatham said we should send another flier around telling them that if cars aren't removed off the streets then they will be towed at owners expense.

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

VOUCHERS:

The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments 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 Councilman Glass and approved on roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	Yes
Councilwoman Hedgepath	Yes
Councilman Hale	Yes
Councilman Lorenzo	Yes
Councilwoman Garcia Montes	Yes

(See Vouchers Next Page)

VOUCHER REPORTS
COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Voucher #	Payable to:	Type of Service	Amount	Check #
02-32-2023	ATT Long distance service	Utilities	\$ 83.94	
02-33-2023	Eric M Bernstein and Associates	Planning Board	\$ 240.00	
02-34-2023	Gannett Newspaper	Clerk OE	\$ 273.68	
02-35-2023	Ho Baker Insurance	Insurance	\$ 250.00	
02-36-2023	Home depot Services	Streets and Roads OE	\$ 486.94	
02-37-2023	Interstate Waste Services	Trash Removal	\$ 11,910.25	
02-38-2023	James Glass	Streets and Roads OE	\$ 350.65	
02-39-2023	JCPL Borough Hall	Utilities	\$ 388.22	
02-40-2023	JCPL Fire House	Fire OE	\$ 220.54	
02-41-2023	JCPL Street lights	Street Lighting	\$ 1,343.66	
02-42-2023	Kenvil Power	Streets and Roads OE	\$ 471.86	
02-43-2023	Morris county assessor association	Tax assessor	\$ 195.00	
02-44-2023	Morris county MUA	Road OE	\$ 380.25	
02-45-2023	Municipal Clerk Association	Clerk OE	\$ 50.00	
02-46-2023	New Jersey Natural Gas	Utilities	\$ 1,405.00	
02-47-2023	Optimum Borough Hall	Clerk OE	\$ 22.91	
02-48-2023	Sheaffer supply Inc	Clerk OE	\$ 44.90	
02-49-2023	Viking Pest Control	Buildings and grounds	\$ 145.80	
02-50-2023	Wex Shell	Road OE	\$ 479.98	
02-51-2023	Hector Lorenzo	Streets and Roads SW	\$ 2,098.08	
02-52-2023	Leticia Diaz	Clerk SW	\$ 1,280.00	
02-53-2023	Manuel Venero	Streets and Roads SW	\$ 1,800.00	
TOTAL			\$ 23,921.66	

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Building Department - 2 permits were issued with a total value of construction of \$20,900.

Property Maintenance - Everyone has a copy of the report.

Municipal Court - We received \$97.42 from the court.

Tax Collector - Total Tax Receipts Month to Date: \$165,234.28
" " " " Year " " \$165,234.28

Registrar - 1 marriage license issued for the month of February.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilwoman Cheatham - We had a teleconference with Community Development. There was nothing more said then what we were told the last time. All applications have been submitted.

Councilman Glass - We have a salter in the garage that hasn't been used in 15 years. I found someone to take a look at it for free. We just have to take it to Rahway where his shop is and he will let us know if it can be fixed and if he can get the parts. The guys did a good job taking care of the streets.

Motion to accept and put on file all reports by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgpeath and approved on verblavote. None opposed.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

LICENSING FEES UPDATE - We talked about this at the last meeting. Council wanted to consider about raising the fees for licensing. Council decided not to increase the fees at this time.

HOUSING OFFICER UPDATE - We spoke about this at the last meeting. I left a message for Kevin. I have not heard back from him yet. Councilwoman Montes said we can probably do this ourselves by sending the landlords letters. We can do that the Clerk said but you need to be able to prove that there are so many people in there. A housing officer has the right to go in and inspect if there is a complaint. We can't do that. The housing officer is licensed. The Mayor said we did that before but the people don't obey because they know we don't have anyone to inspect. Councilman Lorenzo said it would probably cost about \$20,000 a year. The Clerk said she doesn't think Kevin would charge that. When I first spoke to him about it he said he would do it for a few thousand. Council decided not to hire a housing officer at this time.

DOG CENSUS - We always had a dog census but haven't done it in several years because of COVID. The last time it was done was about three years ago. At that time, we had two people doing it and it cost \$577.00. I did reach out to the same people to ask if they were interested in doing it again. They said yes. The cost went up to \$650.00. This is a \$73.00 increase.

Motion was made to have the dog census done by the same people. Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	No
Councilwoman Hedgepath	Yes
Councilman Hale	Yes
Councilman Lorenzo	No
Councilwoman Garcia Montes	No

Mayor broke tie by voting yes to have the census done.

CANNABIS ORDINANCE UPDATE - The Attorney asked that we keep this on hold until he gets back from vacation. This way if there are any questions or comments we can address them before it gets published in the paper.

Council agreed to hold off on this until the Attorney gets back. He will be here the last meeting in March.

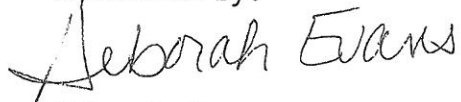
Motion to open the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilman Glass and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Jim Janone - Dog licenses I would not mind paying double. You really need to rethink that. Anyone who has a dog will not care about raising the price. Councilwoman Montes said it will hurt our seniors as they live on a fixed income. It may not hurt you where you have two incomes coming in but for other it will hurt them. You can waive the cost to only 50% for seniors. I also know that the police aren't involved with towing. It happens that way in a lot of towns. You go into a contract with a towing company and they come in and get the cars out. They collect the money from the owner. You need to rethink this also. Also, in regards to the housing officer - you need to rethink that also. Letters don't mean anything. You have to have someone to go after the people. A housing officer is licensed. Councilwoman Montes said if the people don't respond to the letter then we can have our property maintenance person go after them. No, you can't. He isn't licensed to do the housing officer stuff. The housing officer could work with the Dover Board of Education. Kids are coming in here for the free bus ride. You talked about the guys going to Rahway to take the salter down. Are they both going? Probably both of them. I was watching the DPW men last night when they were plowing. They came out of Washington Place and took the snow across the street and dumped it. The Clerk said she will talk to them in the morning. They should not do that.

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 Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Submitted By:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Evans". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the printed name.

Deborah Evans
Borough Clerk