

September 28, 2021

Regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens held on September 28, 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 (arrived at 6:05), Councilman Glass, Councilwoman Hedgepath, Councilman Lorenzo, Councilwoman Garcia Montes.

ABSENT: None

** Attorney Feintuch was also present at this meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes of September 14, 2021 was made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

At this time Mayor Holeman asked for a motion to go out of the regular order of business so that Dr. McLaughlin can speak to us from the Dover Schools.

Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Dr. McLaughlin - Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you at a meeting. I would like to come back to some of your meetings just to be able to give you an update on our schools. School is off to a positive start. All classes are in person.

There have been 13 positive COVID cases within the schools, either staff or students. This is since the beginning of school. We have a covid dashboard on the schools website to allow the community to be up to date on new cases.

We are making every effort to have a safe and healthy environment in our schools. The students have been wonderful on keeping their masks on and continuing to wear them on a regular basis.

Our district continues to grow as we have almost 3,500 students. Of those students, 293 are from Victory Gardens. Pre school is also in full swing with 30 students from Victory Gardens attending. This is 3 and 4 year olds.

We have started a dual language kindergarten program. Children will learn 50% of their time in English and 50% of their time in Spanish. It is the first year of a multi year plan that will extend to 6th grade eventually.

Another thing we are doing for the first time this year is a career and technical education program at Dover High School. This is a cooperative program with Morris County College where students will get in course credit and they will receive other credentials upon graduation from high school.

These are a few things that we have committed to on behalf of our students. Community partnerships will help us reach goals for all our children.

We are having forums for the parents or whomever is interested in attending. I am asking that you allow us to be at the firehouse as an outreach for the parents and children that live here in Victory Gardens. I would like to have a meeting at the firehouse on October 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. if you will allow us to do that. There is no agenda for these meetings it is just a forum to hear their thoughts and share any ideas they may have.

I will let any Council member or Mayor ask any questions if you have any at this time. Thank you for letting me come before your Board tonight.

Councilwoman Montes said that she wanted to thank Dr. McLaughlin for the free lunches for the Victory Gardens children when covid broke out. You were the one that brought the lunches here and we appreciate that.

Councilman Glass asked if the dual language was for everyone? Starting with the kindergarten this year and then moving forward up to grade 6.

Councilwoman Hedgepath said that since the beginning of the year, her son has already missed 5 days of school. He was sent home pending a COVID test. He has seasonal allergies. How are we addressing this? He is only allowed to miss 10 days for the entire year.

Dr. McLaughlin said that this is a challenge that they are facing this year. Any student that is sent home on a quarantine basis is to be provided with virtual learning. Our hope was at the beginning of the year that it would be done after regular school hours. There have been significant limitations and teachers who are available to provide those programs after hours haven't been able to do it. If the after hour programs can not be provided the children will be able to link in virtually with their class. They will not be marked absent. The student will be marked present and it will be marked virtual.

My other question and concern is East Dover School. They do not answer the phone. No matter when you call you get an answering machine all the time. They do not answer the door. I had to go pick up my sons school work. I called them and told them he missed 3 days already and I need to come pick up his work. They told me to come the next day at 2 p.m.. I was waiting outside for 10 minutes. I know they have cameras over there. I know they see me. I called them from outside while I was standing there and I got the answering machine. Its a problem if they don't access. Dr. McLaughlin said he will bring this back to the school.

Mayor Holeman said that our Administrator is trying to make sure that all the kids you are saying are from Victory Gardens are in fact our children. She is going over the paperwork. September 13th data is what was sent to your Administrator. That does have the student names and addresses which is what she requested.

Dr. McLaughlin said that October 15 is the official enrollment that has to be sent to the State. There may be other children that come into the Borough after that but that is our official head count to the State. We will continue to give updates after that date to you as well.

The Clerk asked Dr. McLaughlin if off the top of his head did he know how many children attended schools last year from Victory Gardens. I don't but I will get that information to you tomorrow. Thank you.

Councilwoman Hedgepath said it was brought to our attention that Mine Hill gets an itemized bill from Dover every month. How come we don't get that? Mine Hill is a different relationship. They are send/receive district. Dover/Victory Gardens is a consolidated district. That is why Mine Hill gets a bill.

The Mayor said that Borough Hall would be a better place for you to meet with those interested. We have more space. That is fine. How many do you normally get out for these meetings? About 20. Okay. We will send out an email communication.

Motion to go back into the regular order of business by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

IDEAL AIR - The Clerk said she wanted to mention it to the Council that I had Ideal Air because of somethings that needs to be fixed before winter sets in. Bay 1 they changed and replaced the thermostat and had to put in a new motion in the heater and a new blade. Also, in Bay 2 they fixed a loose wire because that heater wasn't working. Also, in the mens bathroom here in the hallway they had to put a new exhaust motor in because the one we had was not working. The work has been done.

Mayor Holeman asked for a motion from the Council to allow the Board of Education to have their meeting here at Borough Hall on October 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m..

Motion was made by Councilman Glass, seconded by Councilwoman Montes and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

UPDATED COVID REPORT - Our last report from the Board of Health regarding updates on COVID. I was speaking with Councilwoman Montes today and she asked if we received a new update. as of that time, I did not but I spoke with Janet over in Rockaway township and she sent me a new update. On August 20, 2021 we had 253 cases. We now have 258 as of September 21, 2021. So we hve 5 new cases.

CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED -

ZUFALL HEALTH CLINIC - I have a memorandum of understanding form from Zufall that needs to be filled out and sent back to them. The MOU clearly identifies the rules and responsibilities of each of the parties. That would be Zufall Health and the Borough.

What Zufall would do is the following: implement interventions to help the SNAP target audience establish healthy eating habits and physical active lifestyles. Primary prevention of disease among the target audience, implement nutrition education, provide a certificate of insurance for all events and to leave the condition of the building being used as it was before they got there.

Victory Gardens will do the following: Provide the space for Zufall to use, help support their programming, and be available for discussion in letting Zufall know what space they are allowed to use.

Zufall will need the paperwork signed by myself or the Mayor to say they are allowed to come in. They come in month to month and they will give dates once this is signed.

Motion was made for Zufall to come in at the firehouse. Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Motion to approve correspondence by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilman Glass and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

VOUCHERS:

Mayor Holeman asked if there were any questions or comments on the vouchers? There were no questions on the vouchers.

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

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

Voucher #	Payable to:	Type of Service	Amount	Check #
9/21/2021	Advance Auto Parts	Streets & Roads	130.00	
9/22/2021	AT&T	Utilities	46.00	
9/23/2021	County of Morris - Cty Treasurer	Elections - Primary	2,281.55	
9/24/2021	Dover Bd. Of Ed.	School Taxes - Sept. 2021	96,135.00	
9/25/2021	Feintuch, Porwich & Feintuch, ESQ	Legal Services OE - Sept. services	2,150.46	
9/26/2021	Handyman's	Streets & Roads	52.49	
9/27/2021	Interstate Waste Services, Inc.	Trash removal - Sept. services	10,933.33	
9/28/2021	JCP&L - #1 - Fire	Fire OE	171.93	
9/29/2021	JCP&L - #2 - Main	Utilities	494.14	
9/30/2021	JCP&L - #3 - Street Lighting	Street Lighting	621.49	
9/31/2021	JLM Computers	Clerk OE	760.00	
9/32/2021	Morris County MUA	Bldgs. & Grnds. - hazardous waste	262.00	
9/33/2021	Riverview Paving, INC	Cool., Jeff., & Monroe, Paving - DOT gra	76,293.00	
9/34/2021	RVRSa	RVRSa Share - Sept. services	10,608.00	
9/35/2021	Staples	Clerk OE	52.92	
9/36/2021	Treasurer State of NJ	Marriage Licenses	100.00	
9/37/2021	Treasurer State of NJ - DCA	State Training Fees	398.00	
9/38/2021	Verizon - #2 - 366-5312	Utilities	84.69	
9/39/2021	WEX Bank - Shell Gas	Streets & Roads - Fuel for DPW	622.62	
9/40/2021	VSP - Vision Service Plan	Group Insurance - Sept.	98.70	
		TOTAL	202,296.32	

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

BUILDING DEPARTMENT - There were 4 permits issued for a total value of construction \$153,783.71 .

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE - Everyone has a copy of the report.

MUNICIPAL COURT - We received \$267.04 from the court.

TAX COLLECTOR - Total Tax Receipts Month To Date: \$488,794.97
Total Tax Receipts Year To Date: \$1,640,032.69

REGISTRAR - 1 marriage license issued. Total Collected \$28.00

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Glass said all the trucks are ready to go for winter. We ordered parts and everything has been done. We are waiting on 3 spare parts so in case something happens in a storm we have the parts here to replace. The only thing we need to do is order the salt and sand.

There were no other reports from the Council.

Motion to accept and put on file all reports by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

NEW BUSINESS:

FILL VACANCY FOR COUNCILWOMAN WHITE - The Clerk said she received a letter from the local Democratic Committee giving us a name for replacement of Tar White's council seat. There was only one person that expressed interest in the position.

Stuart Hale is the person that showed interest in the position. He has lived in Victory Gardens for about 10 years. He has been a lifelong resident of Morris County. He went to Morristown High School and went on to County College of Morris. By trade he is a licensed plumber. He is very interested in the position of Councilperson and feels it would be an honor to serve. He is a homeowner in Victory Gardens.

Motion was made to fill the vacancy for Councilwoman White to be filled by Stuart Hale. Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

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

JUNETEENTH ATTORNEY FEINTUCH - Attorney Feintuch said this has been declared a federal holiday. I was going over the Policy and Procedure Manual that Deb sent me for updates. Since this is a federal holiday you may want to consider making it a local holiday.

Councilwoman Montes asked if the Attorney would explain what this day is? It is known as freedom day.

Councilman Lorenzo asked why a local holiday? It is a federal holiday. All our holidays are federal holidays. Since they made this a new federal holiday then you should consider it for town hall.

Councilman Glass asked if the schools are closed. Dr. McLaughlin said at this time they have not made a determination.

Councilwoman Montes said we should leave this as is. We have enough days off. The parents won't have anyone to take care of their kids.

Councilman Lorenzo asked if we have to do it now? No, you can wait the Attorney said. You have until next June.

Councilwoman Montes made a motion to table until a future date. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

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

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:

AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE FOR CATS AND DOGS - The Clerk said everyone has a copy of the agreement. We have not had a place to take our cats and dogs for well over a year. We had a contract in the past with Golub that was bought out and now known as Roxbury Animal.

Our contract with them was \$175.00 per month. With Montville it will be \$205.00 per month which is \$30.00 more a month.

I have been trying to call all over to get someone to cover us and no one would. Peter from Rockaway Township has been looking also and he didn't have any luck. I ended up reaching out to the Freeholders and I spoke with Doug Cabana. He told me to reach out to Montville.

I looked back at some of the charges that Roxbury Animal was charging us to compare the tow places. Roxbury was charging anywhere between \$45 to \$75 dollars for euthanizing an animal. That depended on the size of the animal. Montville is a flat rate of \$35.70 per animal. Disposal fees again with roxbury went from \$45 to \$60 dollars per animal. With Montville it is \$30.60 per animal. Montville also tries to adopt out.

The Clerk said that Jerry will remain our Animal Control Officer.

Motion was made to approve Montville as our place for stray animals to go. Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

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

Councilwoman Montes thanked the Clerk for all the work she did trying to find us someone to take our animals.

Attorney Feintuch - He has a couple of words regarding our action with the Dover Board of Education. We have not forwarded any money to them until the case before the Commissioner of Education is resolved. As part of that, the Council agreed that we would not sign the A4F paperwork. That form tells us how much we are being charged for the enrollment of our students. I had said that because of the suit, we should not sign it. I was getting a lot of pressure from the County and from Dover because it was holding up their budget. I had a conference with the Judge two days ago and the Dover Board of Education Attorney as well as the Dover town Council. I agreed to recommend to this Board that we sign the A4F form providing, if we do not agree we can challenge it at a future date. I recommend to the Council to have Debbe sign the form. We reserve their right to challenge the figures. The Judge is fully aware of that. If in the end, we find that we are paying too much then we will get a credit for it.

Motion was made to have the Clerk sign the A4F form with the right to challenge at a later date.

Motion made by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on roll call:

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

*** Mayor Holeman said that starting with our next meeting anyone coming into the courtroom will be required to wear a mask. Covid numbers are going up and we need to keep everyone protected.

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

Jim Janone - Regarding the person you put in for the vacancy. You are saying that the Democratic Committee only came up with one name? Yes, that is all they gave me. I think they are supposed to submit 3. That is correct the Clerk said but maybe no one was interested. The sidewalks are horrible that they are doing. They are done with the sidewalks and the Clerk said they look good. They are now putting grass down. Fire/EMS agreement. Mayor you said that we are paying 4% more. You didn't go into detail. Dovers budget what can you tell us about repairs. I will look into it the Mayor said. Will you have an answer at the next meeting?

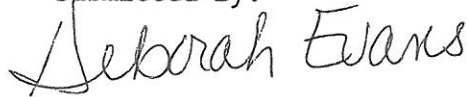
Public Portion Continued:

Jim Janone - I can't answer you until they answer me. What Council meeting did the Council authorize you to do this? When are you doing garbage bids? The Attorney is working on them. Contract runs out in March of next year. Did tara White return all the Borough items she has? What does she have? She never received a book. There shouldn't be anything else that she may have. This is for the Dover Board of Education. I know Councilwoman Hedgepath said some thing about billing and what you send to Mine Hill. It was a report I was referring to that was in the Dover Board of Educations minutes. It was concerning the enrollment to Mine Hill. It was an intemization of grades, and students that Mine Hill sends to Dover. It had nothing to do with billing - it was enrollment. I haven't heard anyone question the contract with Roxbury busing. The busing charges are doubled if not more. I have emailed the Dover Board of Education and I have never heard back from them. That was months ago and I still have not heard anything.

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:



Deborah Evans
Borough Clerk