

October 11, 2022

Regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens, held on October 11, 2022.

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, Councilman Hale, Councilman Lorenzo.

ABSENT: Councilwoman Hedgepath and Councilwoman Montes.

Motion to accept the minutes of September 27, 2022 as received by Councilman Lorenzo, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham 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 the representative from Dover Water could speak with the Council.

Motion to go out of the regular order of business by Councilwoman Cheatham, seconded by Councilman Hale and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

The meeting was turned over to Bob Kinsey from the Dover Water Department. Bob is the Water Superintendent.

Within the past year the State has come up with a plan telling us we have to replace all the galvanized and lead pipes in our system. We are in the Engineering Phase. We are trying to get grants for the work. There is a lot of the galvanized pipes replacement that needs to be done. We are trying to figure out how to spread this over the 10 year period.

We are responsible for the water main to the water meter. If we get grant money we will try to take care of all the costs. If we don't get enough to cover all the work then it will probably fall back on the homeowners.

The Mayor said if there isn't enough grant money that means that our fees will be going up? Yes, that is a possibility. This is a very large project. We have about 7,000 on this system. We have about 6,000 where we don't know what the pipes are. We will have to get into every building and every house to find out what the service equipment is. This will most likely cause a lot of digging. This needs to be done and it will make the water a lot safer. Will the water meters be replaced? Yes we are still working on that. The new meters can be dialogued. We will be able to give customers their usage for every hour of the day for 96 days. Does replacing the meters come before you replacing the pipes? We are replacing the water meters ourselves. It doesn't matter if the meters are done before the service is replaced. Changing out the meters is pretty simple as long as we can get the water turned off. Do you have a cost of what it would be for the residents part of replacing what they have to replace? I don't know for sure. It could cost anywhere between \$3,000 to \$10,000. There is also a form that the homeowner can sign if they don't want to change out their service line. It is a waiver form. I'm not sure what the exact procedure will be for this. I don't know how long they can waive putting the repairs in. The State threw this law out here and now we are trying to figure out what the next steps are. The State is trying to figure it out also.

Councilman Lorenzo asked if they have copper pipes is that okay? Yes, copper is fine. Plastic is also fine. It is only lead and galvanized. Victory Gardens has a lot of galvanized water services. I am not aware of any lead pipes in here but yes, on the galvanized. We have a lot in Dover also.

Bob Kinsey Continued - A lot of the new homes are copper or plastic. Councilman Glass asked about water filters? I know that Newark installed water filters. I don't know if Newark did this or if the homeowners did it and I am not sure how well it worked. I know they had a lot of contractors come in and and they are now changing out the lines. No matter what type of service you have, I tell people to let their water run for a few minutes. The service would be washed out and you are fine. You probably have to run it for about 30 seconds.

The Clerk said when it comes down to the cost, anywhere between \$3,000 to \$10,000 is that payable to Dover or is that something that each individual homeowner has to get done on their own? I haven't gotten to that part yet. It is always an option for the customer to hire their own contractor. If we have a contractor coming in I am sure that they will offer their services to the homeowners. They can have some type of agreement with the contractor. There are a lot of people in Victory Gardens that will not be able to come up with that money. There has to be some type of payment plan or agreement where they pay a certain amount per month. We are trying not to put a lot of the burden on the customer.

Councilman Lorenzo asked in the event that a property doesn't have a shut off valve in the street, are you going to install a shut off valve? Yes. when we go in and replace our side of the water service we always install a water shut off valve. I have that problem. If I have a problem I have to call Dover Water and have them come out to shut the water off. In Victory Gardens you have the meter pits. We can shut the water off there when we come out. Everything is all in one trench. They are very deep. The sewer, water and gas are all in one deep trench.

Councilman Hale asked when you run the meter service when you come into these houses there is just a crawl space. How will you do that? Normally the contractor will do whatever is easiest. We prefer all the meters to be in the house instead of the pits. If it is in a crawl space then it is probably down at least 4 feet. That is to keep it from freezing. When we reinstall services we are going down about 4 feet to avoid freezing pipes. It won't be 10 feet or whatever like it is now. Something like this will be done on a case by case. if you want it to run somewhere else they should be able to do that.

The Mayor asked the audience if they have any questions?

Jim Janone - With the data log is everyone going to be able to have that? Yes. We are trying to get all these upgrades done. I am paying \$55 per quarter for water where before I was paying \$35. The water rate has not gone up since 2018. The rate increase started January 1 of 2019. It wasn't an increase in rates that are making you pay more. You may have an increase in your water usage. The water is very hard. All of New Jersey has hard water. You can always get a water softener. we started installing these meters in 2017. When you were talking about replacing the lead and galvanized pipes, do we have galvanized throughout the whole Borough? There is a lot in here but I don't think it all is. There is some copper. We always here who is covering the costs of the work? If we have a smaller project in Victory Gardens it should cost us less. Can the town apply for funds to help the homeowners out with the costs? This grant would be for Engineering and then we will apply for different grants as the project progresses. We are doing our best to not have the homeowners have to pay a large amount of money. We are going to prioritize the projects. Water pressure has dropped on Franklin Road. There was a water main break. That may have affected the water pressure.

The Mayor thanked Bob for coming out to the meeting and filling us in on what is happening.

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

CORRESPONDENCE:

JCP&L - I talked about this at the last meeting. They have scheduled an outage - weather permitting - for October 20, 2022 from 9-4 p.m.. they need the parking lots cleared. Notice went to us, the lawyers office and nourish.

DOVER BOARD OF EDUCATION - They will be at our meeting on November 22. As a reminder to everyone, we will have no other meetings in November - just the one on the 22nd. They will bring a projector and a computer to the meeting. They will take questions from the Council as well as the audience.

CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED:

FLU CLINIC - Our flu clinic is scheduled for October 18, 2022 from 4-6 p.m. I did send out a flier to the residents.

Motion to accept correspondence as received by Councilman Hale, 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? Councilman Glass said that AJM did come back and clean up most of their work. It wasn't 100% but it was better than alot of the companies have done.

VOUCHER REPORTS

Date of Council Meeting:
October 11, 2022

Voucher #	Payable to:	Type of Service	Amount	Check #
10-01-2022	AJM Contractors Inc	DOT Grant	\$ 86,077.17	
10-02-2022	BIS Digital	Clerk OE	\$ 1,095.00	
10-03-2022	Daily record Classified	Legal OE	\$ 10.92	
10-04-2022	Econo Signs	Road OE	\$ 989.84	
10-05-2022	Morris County Communication Center	Clerk OE	\$ 5,500.00	
10-06-2022	National water main cleaning Company	Road OE	\$ 25,384.32	
10-07-2022	NJNG Firehouse	Fire OE	\$ 297.00	
10-08-2022	Office concepts group	Clerk OE	\$ 597.52	
10-09-2022	RVRSA	RVRSA Shares	\$ 20,126.00	
10-10-2022	Treasurer state of New Jersey	Clerk OE	\$ 1,982.67	
10-11-2022	Eduardo Martinez	Streets & Road SW	\$ 2,675.20	
10-12-2022	Hector Lorenzo	Streets & Road SW	\$ 1,656.00	
10-13-2022	Leticia Diaz	Admin SW	\$ 1,340.00	
10-14-2022	State of new jersey Dept of Labor	Clerk OE	\$ 71.75	
		Total	\$ 147,803.39	

Add on by Joe K

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

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	Abstain
Councilman Hale	Yes
Councilman Lorenzo	Yes

NEW BUSINESS:

NATIONAL WATER MAIN ESTIMATE - National Water Main is the company that came in a scoped the top half of the Borough. I showed everyone the map at the last meeting. There were a few things that needed repairs and one area that we needed to replace a complete liner.

There are 3 place point repairs that have to be done. Each one will cost \$3,100 apiece. Which for the 3 will be a total of \$9,300.00 .

Leon said that structually this is more critical than the other part that needs to be corrected.

There is a manhole to manhole complete liner that needs to be replaced. That is up by Victory Hill East. It is 160 linear feet that has to be replaced. They are giving us an estimate of \$17,280 for replacement. Plus and additional cost of \$750 to reinstate service connections.

Leon says the 3 place point repairs are more critical and they should be addressed as quickly as possible.

Joe C. said that this stuff would come out of the American Rescue Money. It will be no cost to the Borough.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:

NATIONAL WATER MAIN ESTIMATE CONTINUED - Motion was made to approve the cost of \$9,300 for 3 place point repairs.

Motion made by Councilman Lorenzo, seconded by Councilman Hale and approved on roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	Yes
Councilman Hale	Yes
Councilman Lorenzo	Yes

DOVER WATER - We discussed already earlier in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

ACCUMULATED SICK TIME AND VACATION TIME & HEALTH INSURANCE AFTER RETIREMENT - The Clerk said everyone has a copy of the information from the last meeting. There is a section in our policy manual, I gave everyone a copy, that reads: should an employee have 25 years of service with the Borough they shall receive full payment for all unused sick time.

I have talked to the Council before about this. The other page I gave you is health benefits and that the Borough will continue to pay health benefits for the employee after retirement.

I had explained before, several times when this was brought up, you can change that policy. It will not affect Eddie, Hector or myself. It will be for any new people coming in. Since Letty is working for the Borough, and you do have a job opening for the DPW, you may want to act on this as soon as possible.

I'm not sure how you would want to change these policies but you may consider for sick time that an employee on retirement will get only half their accumulated sick time instead of all of it.

Councilman Lorenzo asked what happens if you leave before the 25 years? Then the policy covers that saying you would only get half the accumulated days.

The Attorney said that persons hired after 2010 only get a maximum of \$15,000 at retirement. That would be Letty and whomever else comes on after that.

The Clerk said right now our policy says that when a person retires and they have 25 years in with the Borough they will receive full payment for all unused sick time. Since Eddie is the one retiring between his sick time and vacation time his payout would be \$20,064. You may be able to say that instead of paying that full amount out at one time it can be divided into payments for the retiree.

The Attorney said that the retiree may want it pro rated so that they aren't getting hit with all that money at one time because of income taxes. You can put in the policy that the retiree has the option of deferring payment up to 2 or 3 or 4 years after retirement.

Councilman Lorenzo asked if we have anything in the policy now that says when vacation time has to be used and what can be carried over? Yes, we have that one week can be carried over and it has to be used by April 1 of the following year.

Councilman Lorenzo said the medical benefits have to stop. The Clerk said that is up to the Council to change the policy.

The Attorney said we can say that all health benefits will stop on retirement regardless of how many years a person has in. Councilman Lorenzo said that when he retires from his job he has no health benefits.

The Mayor said that working for the State or local government, it wasn't how much you made but the benefits. That is why a lot of people took government jobs. The Attorney said you have to specify the number of years also.

The Clerk will check with the State and see what their policy is. That would be for health benefits but what about sick time? Sick time is local.

We will put this on for the next agenda.

The Attorney said that we have not adopted the new code book yet. It has to be reviewed by us to see if it is what it is supposed to be. I thought that a few Council members said they would look over the book. The Clerk said there were 2 Councilmembers that said they would go over the book. I believe at one of the meetings after that one of the members said it was too complicated and that we should have the Attorney do it. The Attorney said he never heard from anyone if they want him to do it. However, if I do it, it will be costly. You have to think about this and get it done.

Jim Janone - In regards to the code, Council has to understand you're the Governing Body. You make the rules. The Attorney reviews and makes sure everything is in order. You as the Council would know more of what fits for this town. Council needs to look at the book. The Clerk said the ecode is on the website. About your policy you can always repeal it and then take your time on redoing what happens to be changed. For the schools, they should have monthly attendance sheets and that is something you should get on a monthly basis. Do you have an administrative code? No we have the policy book. Dover schools say they have an influx of kids of about 3,500. That is why they need the new schools.

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

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

Submitted By:



Deborah Evans
Borough Clerk