

March 15, 2022

This is a workshop meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens held on March 15, 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 Meetings Act.

ATTENDANCE: Councilwoman Cheatham, Councilman Glass, Councilwoman Hedgepath, Councilman Hale, Councilman Lorenzo, Councilwoman Garcia Montes.

ABSENT: None

Motion to accept the minutes of February 15, 2002 as received by Councilwoman Hedgepath seconded by Councilman Lorenzo and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Tonights meeting is for discussion on the 2022 Budget. We have our CFO here tonight and our Auditor Man Lee. At this time the Mayor turned the meeting over to our CFO, Joe.

Joe said he put some other items in the budget that we had talked about at the last meeting. One of them was the salary increases. The last thing we had to go over was what we were going to do with the money from the American Recovery Act. Man and I attended a meeting where we went over all this stuff and how the money could be used. Our original plan as Debbe asked was to do the infrastructure plans. Deb suggested this and this is a good idea. We would like to stick to the plan of infrastructure. This is the best outlet for those funds. I also know now what the second payment from the Federal Government will be. We will have a good amount of funding for the sewer project and then whatever else we need to do.

We are still working off a temporary budget and we may have to do another temporary budget. We have a 4 year window to spend the grant money in it's entirety.

Councilman Glass asked about the purifiers? We will be able to get them but not until the budget is adopted. Then we will be able to take that money out of the Recovery Plan money.

We are in good shape with the budget. Does anyone have any questions? The Clerk asked what is the total that we will be getting from the Recovery Act? It will be approximately \$152,000.

Man said that the average home assessed at \$172,000 the raise in taxes will equate to about \$5.96 per month which comes out to \$71.00 a year. This is on the local level. We don't know what the schools are doing. The County is flat again this year.

Joe said that we don't know how much the sewer line scope will cost us. However, if it is more expensive than what we have from the Recovery Plan then we know at least a big chunk is being paid by that. We may find that we have no problems with the sewers. Although Debbe and I looked at the map in the Mayors office there are some lines that have been replaced - actually almost the whole town but some of them have been over 20 years ago.

Whatever we don't spend from the Recovery Act at the end of 4 years will have to go back to the government.

Councilwoman Montes asked if we don't use all the money on the sewer lines can we use it to get a generator? Once we look at what the sewer scope will cost, yes, we can look at other projects. If you want to do a generator we could do that.

Councilman Glass asked if we could buy a truck? One time projects are good the CFO said. Councilwoman Montes said we don't need another truck. We have 3 trucks and only 2 men.

The Mayor said that the only thing we have to consider is what the costs for the schools will be? Yes.

There will be no other budget meetings this year. We are done. We will introduce at your Council meeting on the 22nd.

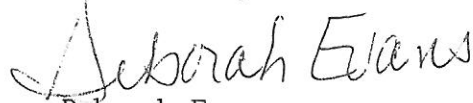
Motion to open the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Cheatham, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Jim Janone - what are the increases for those that work here? What is the the percentage for salaries? 4% . Do I understand correctly that the professionals will not get a raise? Correct. What is the fund balance from the Board of Education when we had it here? We spend \$48,000 a year from that balance. At the end of last year we had approximately \$887,000 left in the account. That is about 19 years left before that fund is depleted. Your audit from last year is still not posted on the website. Jim said that he heard from the tapes that Joe said the Engineer and Attorney were paid out a lot of money this year. Yes, there were a lot of legal things going on. We are billed hourly for thier time. Hopefully these issues will be resolved. I know Council talked about other things they wanted to do like codification of the ordinances. Is that included in the budget? It should be included, depending on the cost, under the Clerks line item.

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

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

Submitted By:

  
Deborah Evans  
Borough Clerk