

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

The Council Meeting of Wednesday, September 2, 2025 was called to order by Council President, Rebecca Smith, at 6:30 PM in Municipal Hall Chambers, 235 East Airy Street, Norristown, PA.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The following Council members were in attendance:

Dustin Queenan
William McCoy
Mydera Robinson
Natalie Colson
Jasmine Griffen
Rebecca Smith

Also in attendance were:

Leonard Lightner, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Lieutenant Angelucci, Norristown Police Department; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Amanda Ciarlante, Assistant Director of Finance; Judy Richards, Assistant Manager, Buildings & Code Enforcement; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief

Councilwoman Robinson announced that it was Council President Smith's birthday and then President Smith noted it was Jim Watters' birthday, a resident who comes to almost every meeting.

Councilwoman Robinson shared her condolences to the family of Juan Fontanez, known as "The Gentle Giant." She said that "if you didn't know him, you missed out."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson** to approve the Minutes from the August 29, 2025 Council Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Water Ice with a Cop" – additional dates: Wednesday, September 3rd at Marshall and Kohn Streets and Thursday, September 4th at Haws Avenue and Elm Street at 5 pm.

Registration for the Basketball Fall/Winter League at the Norristown Recreation Center is underway. League starts on September 29th.

The final Concert in the Park on September 7th at 7 pm with a back to school party with Rotation Records.

Open House of the Montgomery Hose Fire Company on October 8th from 6 to 8 pm.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

Leonard Lightner responded to a recent Public Comment from Laura Smith saying that block parties are regulated by the Ordinance and that there are things to consider before having one such as the need for Police, EMs, Fire Dept. and Public Works, traffic and safety access. Other things to consider are the notification to PECO, PAWC and PennDOT. He said there should always be Safety, Fairness and Municipal Responsibility.

In response to applying for a position on a Board, Commission or Committee, Mr. Lightner presented a Power Point highlighting the process which can be found on the Municipal website. He said that the final process is that when a resume is received from the applicant, the requirements are verified and Council reviews them. He added that the applicant is contacted and within 30 days, it is added to the agenda for a decision from Council.

Mr. Lightner responded to a comment regarding a need for a Handicapped Sign. He noted that there is a maximum amount of Handicapped Parking in certain areas. He said that they are working with Council to look at the Ordinance to find a solution to this issue.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Watters, Stanbridge Street – He said he is concerned with the number of accidents at Selma and West Airy Streets. He suggested trimming trees and painting lines on the streets. He also suggested having crosswalks. He also said they need to figure out flooding since the floodgate was turned off in 1933 by the USGS. He said that there are six municipalities with uncontrolled stormwater. He said he has documentation that indicates that 75% of the streams are impaired.

Tarin Kumar – 1512 Stanbridge Street – He said that the alley behind the 1400 and 1500 blocks of Stanbridge Street has several potholes which poses a safety issue and it is also an eyesore. He also said he has a signed petition. He added that with the growth happening in the Municipality, the alleys should be included in the paving schedule.

Tiffany Todd – Freedley Street – She said that there are unpermitted cars parked on Fornance Street. She suggested asking the landlord to open the garage behind the Human Resource Building.

Yvonne Platts, Arch Street – She thinks that the License Plate Readers are a bad idea. She said that Councilman Queenan and Councilwoman Robinson spoke well about it at the meeting when it was on the agenda. She said that it is not going to solve the parking problems. She wants to know how these decisions are made because it impacts the residents.

Melvin Faust, 1200 block of Airy Street – He asked who has the rights to Airy Street? He said there needs to be flashing lights to slow down the traffic. He also said there is a garage on the 1200 block of Main Street where cars are repaired. He wondered if this was legal. He asked Council if they walk the neighborhoods? He said they should be visible and see what's happening.

Benna – 1103 Swede Street – She said she was born and raised in Norristown. She lost her son recently while he was playing basketball in Simmons Park. She said, "To know my son is to know me." She said she is appreciative of what is being done with the park in his honor.

Representative Gregory Scott – He attended the meeting to honor the memory of Rob Hill for which a commemorative plaque is requested to be put in Simmons Park. He said that Benna lost her one and only child. He said this is also in memory of families who have faced hardship like Megan Green in 2023 and Quention Watson in 2022. He said these are sons, friends and students. He asked that Council approve the plaque and AD stand. He added that this is the reason why he has held free Community Heart Health Screenings.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 25-74: Request for Municipal Council to authorize a Commemorative Plaque at Simmons Park in memory of Robert "Rob" Hill

Mr. Lightner noted that this in remembrance of Rob Hill with the dedication and an AD stand that can hold an AD machine that will take place on October 18th.

Councilwoman Robinson said this is a story that is "overdue – a Hero story." She said there needs to be clear communication in the process.

Councilman Queenan said that he has outstanding questions that were never answered. He asked about the security of the AD machine.

Mr. Lightner told him that there is an alarm on the AD machine and it will only be used for major events and will have staff support.

Councilman Queenan stated that there should be a process in place for others that want this.

Mr. Lightner said a policy will be drafted and will be presented to Legal.

Councilman Queenan said he wishes there was a discussion.

Solicitor Kilkenny said he was asked by Councilwoman Colson to look into the matter regarding the plaque. He said there was nothing in writing regarding a plaque so he asked for a draft policy to bring before Council.

Councilwoman Griffen said that “people ask questions but we don’t get answers.” She added that “everyone should have accurate information.”

Councilwoman Robinson said “questions and answers are important and Council has to have that dialogue but also, to my colleagues, we need to be flexible when a precedent is set. Fairness means getting started and making something happen.” She added “we shouldn’t use our questions in a weaponized way.” She said she did not experience no questions answered. She continued, “Speaking for myself, to take a moment like this and turn it into something bigger feels wrong.”

She said she “hopes all colleagues work toward the greater good and that sometimes you just need to start.”

Councilman Queenan commented that Work Sessions should be used for that. He said that Councilwoman Colson is new and didn’t know she had to bring it to Council so he suggested that she bring it to Council.

Speaking to Benna, he said, “I’m just trying to resolve this issue which I knew would be an issue behind closed doors so there would be no hiccup in how you want to honor your son.”

He continued, “If the Municipality’s name is going on there, that’s all of Council.” He said that they need to come up with Ordinances and Policies so there can be order in Norristown.

Council President Smith told Councilman Queenan, “You wanted this to come to Council and you requested guidance from the Solicitor. The Solicitor is here.”

Councilman McCoy commented that this matter should be discussed in Executive Session to which Solicitor Kilkenny noted that Executive Session is only for Real Estate, Personnel and Litigation matters.

Councilwoman Griffen commented that “Councilwoman Robinson may have took what I said completely out of context. I never said it wasn’t important. I didn’t try to weaponize anything. People ask questions and need answers. It’s a seven member Council – why should only three have the information?” She said, “We need people to stop making a grandstand. We’re all supposed to want what’s good for this town.”

Council President Smith addressed Benna (mother of Rob Hill) by saying, “I’m sorry that you came here to talk bravely about your son and it getting weaponized about the process. You will

have my support with a vote because I don't think the absence of a process here should preclude you from getting what you advocated for here. I will ask the Solicitor for clarification after the vote so it won't be taken away from you."

Solicitor Kilkenny commented that "No one has done anything wrong. There was no clear process but the Administration is putting forward a policy so there can be clear guidance going forward."

Councilwoman Colson said this matter about a dedication for Rob Hill was brought to her attention and she did what she felt was right. She said, "It was not an ill intent not to include all."

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen**, to authorize a commemorative plaque in memory of Robert "Rob" Hill. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 25-75: Request for Municipal Council's approval to amend Resolution 25-55 regarding appointments to Boards, Commissions and Committees

Mr. Lightner noted that Council originally passed this Resolution on July 15, 2025 to appoint Amber Curnew from the Planning Commission to be on the Blighted Property Review Committee but Alvina Hamme was requested to replace her due to Ms. Curnew's availability and Ms. Hamme's willingness to serve.

He said there is no application but according to the Ordinance of the Blighted Property Review Committee, a representative from the Planning Commission must be represented and Ms. Hamme was elected per this requirement and the Planning Commission recommended her.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Colson, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to amend Resolution 25-55 in order to update the membership of the Blighted Property Removal Committee by removing Amber Curnew and appointing Alvina Hamme to serve in her place. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 25-76: Request of Municipal Council's approval of minor construction and furnishings for additional workplaces in the Code, Planning and Police Departments for a total cost of \$93,236.14

Mr. Lightner said this is "a one-stop shop. He said that the current Public Works building is not ADA compliant.

He said this work is a necessity and is fully budgeted. He added it is convenient because staff is in one place.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to table this item because some members of Council need more information. **The motion to table passed 5-1** (with Council President Smith voting no.)

PUBLIC WORKS

Resolution 25-66: Winter Maintenance Services Agreement between the Commonwealth of PA, acting through the Department of Transportation (“PennDOT”) and the Municipality of Norristown, to ensure an efficient and effective maintenance program during the winter seasons starting from 2025 – 2026 for 10 years – total sum involved \$198,558.16

Director Odenigbo shared what streets are involved.

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve a 10-year agreement for Snow and Ice Control of State Roads in Norristown for a total amount of \$198,558.16. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 25-71: Council to approve the contract awarded to Corbo Landscaping, Inc. (COSTARS #127643) in the amount of \$192,000 at COSTAR price for tree pruning, removal of dead trees and weight reduction along Main Street, Marshall Street and Dekalb Street

Director Odenigbo said this is a COSTAR price and the money is from the ARPA Funds.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Colson, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve the contract awarded to Corbo Landscaping. **The motion passed 4-2** (with Councilman Queenan and Councilwoman Griffen voting no.)

Resolution 25-72: Council to approve an award in the amount of \$463,500 (COSTARS price) to R Smith Paving Contractors (COSTARS #014-E23-334) for the paving and stamping of intersections on Main Street.

Thomas Odenigbo said this is part of the Beautification Project.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Colson, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 25-72 for the award to R Smith Paving Contractors for the paving and stamping of intersections on Main Street. The proposal includes:

Paving, Mill/Cut/Excavate asphalt 2”; clean and haul away debris; supply and install 2”-9.5 mm hot asphalt top; stamping; infrared heat asphalt; imprint pattern with border; apply HD colorpave acrylic for these areas: Main and Barbados, Main and Cherry, Main and Dekalb, Main and Green, Main and Arch and Main and Walnut Streets.

The motion passed 6-0.

Resolution 25-73: Council to approve the contract awarded to Signarama Montco (COSTARS 032-E24-087) in the amount of \$398,853.08 (COSTARS price) for work that will include replacement and installation of signs, street IDs, wrapping of Big Belly cans, traffic signal boxes, painting of streetlight poles and other miscellaneous.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Colson, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen, to approve Resolution 25-73 for the work needed. **The motion passed 6-0.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Presenting Departments present monthly updates to Council.

Public Works

Thomas Odenigbo noted that the Department continues to clean streets, do street sweeping, clean parks, pave alleys and fill potholes. He said there will be a "City Sweep" in October at 9 locations.

Building/Code

Judy Richards reported there were 257 Inspections, 342 rental inspections, 342 property transfers, 1006 permits issued, 1786 Quick tickets, 1081 code violations, 117 assistance of other agencies, 3 Community Outreach events, 84 training hours. She noted there are 3 new Code Compliance Officers and 3 Officers received their 2021 International Code Council Property Management Certification and FEMA Certification.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion by Councilwoman Colson, seconded by Councilman Queenan, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Roseann Santangelo