

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, September 16, 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
Rashaad Bates
Rebecca Smith

Also in attendance were:

Leonard Lightner, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Keith Gordon, Code Enforcement Manager; Acting Police Chief Angelucci, Norristown Police Department; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve the Minutes from September 2, 2025. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Smith announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the Council Work Session to discuss personnel and litigation issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Vice President Bates announced that September is "Sickle Cell Awareness Month."

Pumpkin Carving Contest at the Recreation Center on October 17th from 5 to 8 pm.

The Chamber of Commerce, along with the County and the Municipality, will hold a workshop on how to bid on contracts and proposals on October 28th at 5:30 pm.

Police Service Areas: September 22, Sergeant North, United Methodist Church on Haws Avenue from 6 to 8 pm. September 24, Sergeant Langdon, Norristown Church of God from 6-8 pm. Sergeant Rambo September 29, St. Francis Church from 5 to 7 pm. September 30, Sergeant DeOrzio at the Municipality Building from 6 to 8 pm.

Keep Norristown Beautiful at the Montgomery County Public Library – "Clean and Green" on September 18 from 6 to 7:30 pm in person and virtual on September 29th from 6 to 7:30 pm.

The Norristown Public Library is having a game night on September 29th at the vonC Brewery from 6 to 9 pm.

The Norristown Fire Department is having an Open House at Montgomery Hose, 201 W Freedley Street, on October 8th from 6-8 pm.

Council Vice President Bates wished a Happy Belated Birthday to Jayne Musonye and also to Councilman McCoy and Councilwoman Colson for their upcoming birthdays.

Responses to Questions from the last Council Meeting

Leonard Lightner responded to Mr. Kumar regarding the alley at the 1400 and 1500 block of Stanbridge Street which have potholes that present a safety issue and they are an eyesore. Mr. Kumar had a petition signed.

Mr. Lightner thanked him and told him that this issue is presented on tonight's agenda with regard to Resolution 25-80 which is an update to a previous Resolution . He noted that, if this Resolution is passed, it will allow residents, through a petition process, to request certain maintenance actions to take place in private alleys which are normally the responsibility of the abutting property owners.

Mr. Lightner responded to Tiffani Todd. He asked if Ms. Todd could stay after tonight's meeting to meet with him and Chief Angelucci because they did not fully understand what her question was.

He responded to Yvonne Platts regarding her not approving of the License Plate Readers. He told her they free up spaces that are illegally occupied; it's a tool for fair and consistent enforcement of public safety; it improves efficiency because more plates can be read versus a person on foot doing it; saves time and money and helps recover stolen vehicles and helps with Amber Alerts. He noted that there have been 150 stolen vehicles year-to-date in Norristown.

His final response was to Melvin Faust regarding the 1200 block of Airy Street and Selma Street. Mr. Faust asked who the has the rights to that street and suggested putting up flashing lights due to the accidents and he complained about a garage in Main Street doing repairs.

Mr. Lightner said that since the last meeting, Mr. Faust has met with Thomas Odenigbo and the Traffic Engineer at that location to help solve the issue.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carmina Taylor, 110 East Main Street – Ms. Taylor said she is a new resident. She was hit by a car at Lafayette & Dekalb Streets. She said she was pressured by her family to file a Police report and obtain the video of the accident. She was given

an email for a Detective, which turned out to be the wrong email address. She went to speak to the Detective but never received a response. She filed a Right-to-Know request and found she should contact PennDOT. She said she should have been told who is responsible and she needs her rights to be actualized.

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – He said he was affected by the crash at Airy & Selma Streets. He said the trees need to be trimmed in that area, the stop sign should be on the other side and add speed bumps. He is looking into the Elmwood Park flood issue and who is at fault. He said the Conservation District has no enforcement powers. He is going to request records regarding the Stony Creek overlay and he will be asking Senator Cappelletti to have a meeting regarding the Elmwood Park issue. He said that the government did nothing regarding the Clean Water Act of 2022.

Terrence Barnes, Noble Street – He noted that at a past meeting, Heather Lewis said that the Municipality no longer supports the Trunk or Treat. He said it brings together businesses and children. He requested that Council look for donations including discretionary funds.

He also made a comment to Council “to put aside petty grievances, the party infighting, emotions and personal dislikes and come together to strengthen a community underwhelmed by your actions, overwhelmed by your drama...” He said he can offer his assistance in any way.

Following Mr. Barnes’ comments, Councilman Queenan and Councilman McCoy offered \$250 each from their discretionary funds for “Trunk or Treat.”

Mary Ellen DiGregorio, 500 block East Main Street, Norristown – She said that “This is not a personal thing. I have nothing personal invested here.” She said she was part of Home Rule Charter. She said she sat through many Council, Planning and Zoning meetings.

She said that she knows she is right concerning the Public Hearing issue on the agenda because it is not fair. She asked for a vote for the hearing. She said that according to the Norristown Water Authority, Councilman Queenan has been living out of Norristown for 3 years and that he wasn’t transparent when completing his paperwork in March to run again for Council.

She said the rules need to be followed. She said to hold the Councilman accountable.

She said that part of the Home Rule Charter was changed to get rid of corruption but feels "It's time to vote for a new Solicitor."

Councilman Queenan responded. He said, "Do your research and look up the work "defamation." He said that he is being accused of being a fraud and if he proves he's a resident, he can sue for defamation.

Laura Smith, Powell Street – She thanked Leonard Lightner for the information regarding block parties. She suggested there be an easier way to follow the process for having block parties. She said that Council should come together and talk about it. She noted they had a block party on Arch Street with no incidents. With regard to another matter, she said to President Smith, "Committee members have meetings" and "It's starting to get too personal." She said that everyone has to work together.

Erica Warthon – She said, "I am a defender. I know that Dustin Queenan resides in Norristown." She suggested to Leonard Lightner that there be a retreat with Council to understand the by-laws. She said there is a hidden agenda.

Doreen Queenan, 1312 West Elm Street – She said she wants to defend her good last name. She said she works for a Fortune 4 company and her work impacts 22 million Americans. To Rebecca Smith she said, "Norristown deserves better than your infantile attempt at leadership. If you would have exercised an ounce of due diligence, before adding item 12 to the agenda, you would have discovered Councilman Queenan, a legal resident of Norristown and District 3, is also a crime victim." She said his home was vandalized and burglarized and that the attack seemed personal.

She said she couldn't understand who would do this to her brother. She accused Council President Smith of using this tragedy for political gain.

Taria – She was born and raised in Norristown and she asked that the PAL Center come back. She said the kids have nothing to do. She said she helped with Trunk

or Treat for years but now she said the Municipality has pulled out of it. She asked for financial help with “Teen Summit” which was held in June and December last year. She was told she would not receive funding because she was partnered with Heather Lewis. She said she was also involved in SRC to clean up the streets but is aware that \$3,000 was given to another group that doesn’t do a good job. She also is involved with “Halfway to Potential” for at-risk youths.

She said, “The division has to stop.” She suggested to Rebecca Smith that maybe she should come to “Restore Justice” to learn how to settle conflict.

Leonard Lightner said that everyone needs to hear this for the record. He said that it was never said that they are pulling out of “Trunk or Treat.” He said the money is in the budget to support it. He said that a written agreement is needed with the organization regarding who’s responsible for what. He said they spoke with Tracie who handles special events to see how things look. He added that before things are said, the residents should reach out to him and ask what the facts are. He also said that they are working on bringing the PAL Center back and they are also working with “Halfway to Potential.”

Fatai - Freedley & Powell. He said he has a business, “Taste of the Islands,” on Powell & Freedley Streets. His complaint is that some of his customers get parking tickets for parking less than 20 feet away from the stop sign. He asked that it be marked for the 20 feet so they know.

Alvina Hamme – She said she learned from being in the Citizens Learning Academy that she is next to a private alley. She had met with the Public Works Director in 2022 but she wanted to raise her concerns tonight since it is on the agenda. She reiterated that 75% of the residents who abutt the alley and sign the petition would be required to pay. She asked if Thomas Odenigbo could elaborate on this when it comes up in tonight’s meeting. To Council she posed these questions: has this Resolution been effective in getting the private alleys repaired and could this Resolution unintentionally delay or prevent the paving of other alleys that have become unsafe due to neglect? She added, “How realistic is it for some residents not in Occupied Housing to successfully petition landlords? and is there an Ordinance in place to successfully petition landlords and owners? She continued, “Is there an Ordinance in place to make sure these alleys are maintained just as other residents are expected to care for their sidewalks? and

consider at what point does the need for safety and successful easement outweigh the requirement for a petition? and “Why do you allow homeowners who will benefit from the paving have the ability to opt out financially simply because they did not sign the petition?”

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Resolution 25-70: Authorizing the submission of a Grant application to the PA DCED requesting \$1,000,000 to LSA Grant Funding for the Elmwood Park Recreation Center Project

Jayne Musonye provided background information. She noted there will be 6 Phases and that the County set aside \$5 million for the project. She added they applied for local funds and will hear back in the next two months and there is no match.

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve Resolution 25-70 requesting that Council authorize the submission of an LSA Grant application to DCED to complete the Elmwood Park Recreation Center Project. **The motion passed unanimously.**

POLICE

Motion to request Council to approve the application and acceptance of the 2024 Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP) Grant

Acting Chief Angelucci noted that the amount changed to \$191,600 and it is currently budgeted. He said there will be a savings of \$20,000 per year. He said the match amount is \$28,740.

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to request Council to approve the application and acceptance of the 2024 Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP) Grant. **The motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC WORKS

Resolution 25-77: For Municipal Council to authorize an award in the amount of \$67,950 to Passerini Construction, Inc. for the repair of a sinkhole at 220 East Washington Street

Thomas Odenigbo explained that this is an emergency situation.

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the authorization of an award in the amount of \$67,950 to Passerini Construction, Inc. for the repair of a sinkhole at 220 East Washington Street. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 25-80: A Resolution of the Municipality of Norristown, Montgomery County, PA, establishing a Private Alley Policy for Municipal Acceptance, Dedication and Maintenance

Thomas Odenigbo noted that this Resolution was originally passed in 2021.

He provided information regarding the provisions of the Resolution.

He asked that Council pass this Resolution to expire on December 31, 2026.

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the renewal of Resolution 21-47 of 2021 establishing a Private Alley Policy for Municipal Acceptance, Dedication and Maintenance. **The motion passed unanimously.**

COUNCIL

Authorization of a Public Hearing under Section 41.3-312 of the Norristown Charter

Council President Smith explained the process and noted this is per the community's request for greater transparency.

She noted she received a complaint on September 4, 2025 regarding Councilman Queenan not living in Norristown. She said she contacted him on 4 occasions but the calls went unanswered. She said she reflected heavily on this matter but also did not want to fail in her duty to uphold the Charter. She added that, as a former 3rd District resident, she would want an answer.

Sean Kilkenny explained the legal opinion by first reading communication dated September 5th sent by Patrick Hitchens from Kilkenny Law to Council. The letter stated that the Municipality received a letter from Mary Ellen DiGregorio on September 4th, 2025 requesting that Council request a public hearing. He read the procedures regarding having this hearing, noting that the majority must agree to the hearing.

Councilman Queenan read from his letter. He said this is a “baseless agenda item.” He said that his home at 1100 Astor Street was robbed and he is currently in litigation regarding this. He said he’s been accused of Fraud without evidence or investigation. He said, “This is not government – it’s political theatre.” He asked Rebecca Smith if she is prepared to go under oath that she personally verified his residency. He said it’s been a smear campaign and he will use all legal means.

Council President Smith said she hopes this comes to a resolution.

Councilwoman Griffen commented that the report “seemed targeted, strange and odd.” She said that it seems that the President is saying that anyone who is displaced is not a resident. She feels this item should not be on the agenda.

Councilman Queenan told Council President Smith that there was no rush to put this on the agenda and that she could have sought out information. There was a choice.

Council Vice President Bates noted that when Council President Smith called him, he agreed it needed to be on the agenda. He referred to an email stating that Councilman Queenan may not have been a resident of Norristown for a couple of years. He said that Councilman Queenan should have worked with legal counsel to resolve his personal matters and make a public decision that he lives here or

resign. Council Vice President Bates said he wanted to assure that the process is handled fairly, transparently and within our legal responsibilities.

Councilman Queenan asked Vice President Bates what are the legal responsibilities knowing he is in litigation?

Councilwoman Griffen commented, "We can't pick and choose when to be transparent."

Councilman McCoy asked why would someone stalk a person and take pictures and then using the information as evidence with no time stamps to verify where a car was?

Councilman Queenan said that the Police Report that was posted leaked his private information.

Councilwoman Robinson said that "care has to be a part of the process." She said she would have preferred a conversation with Councilman Queenan. She said she has "concerns about how we got here." She said that "hardship" should be mentioned as a clause. She asked, "How do we define residency?"

Council President Smith noted she also tried contacting other Council members with no response.

Council President Smith asked for a motion to authorize the Public Hearing. There was no motion. She asked for a motion 3 times. There was no motion. There will not be a hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk of Council