NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2025

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, October 21, 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
Mydera Robinson
Jasmine Griffen
Rashaad Bates
Rebecca Smith

Also in attendance were:

Leonard Lightner, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Michael Trail, Norristown Police Chief; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Vincent Poppa, Assistant Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Amanda Ciarlante, Assistant Director of Finance; Alecia Fields, Senior Anaylst; Darlene Norwood, Human Resources Manager; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Keith Gordon, Code Enforcement Manager; Thomas O’Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Bri-Ana Hawkins,Director of Recreation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Council Vice President Bates,** to approve the Minutes from October 7, 2025. **The motion passed 5-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall Meeting, Councilwoman Colson's 4th District, November 12th at 6 pm at the American Legion.

Norristown Chamber of Commerce and ACLAMO, October 28th 5:30 to 7:30, 56 Buttonwood Street.

"Paint a Pumpkin" at the Norristown Public Library at 5:30 pm.

"National Family Literacy Day" on November 1st from 10:30 to 1:00 pm at the Norristown Public Library.

Leaf Collection October 27th pickup is same as street cleaning day.

"Trunk or Treat" at the Recreation Center from 4 to 7 pm.

Next Council meeting is on Wednesday, November 5 because of Voting Day.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – He reminded everyone about the Vietnam Vets 5K Run and 1 mile walk at the Farm Park on November 1st. He said there was a constitutional violation by the National Guard regarding the foul state of the waterways in Montgomery County. He mentioned a case study he's been following since 1991 and sent information to 3 Legislators but they claimed no jurisdiction.

Anthea Lett – 0 West Basin (between Powell & Swede). She complained about car accidents on her street and the need for speed bumps. She said you can't let the kids play. She added there is an issue with the side with no parking for cleaning. She said they were told they could park on the other side until after cleaning but they are given tickets. She said there are cars that take up 1 ½ spaces. She said it's a safety issue at night with parking and cars go around stopped buses where a child was hit.

Symta – She said there needs to be a crackdown on ticketing cars. She said that 7 am is too early for ticketing. She said there are commercial vans parked. She was told that Officer Butterworth is the person to speak to. She asked how to get in front of him.

Erika Wharton – she addressed each member of Council individually and Leonard Lightner. She said she has everyone's back.

Lillian Mayer, Basin Street – She asked what time do parking tickets get issued – 7:30 or 8:00 am? She said there is nowhere to park and there no warning about the ticketing.

Christopher Jackson, Thomas Street – He said there is dumping on a vacant lot that discourages others moving in. He addressed this back in 2022 with Mr. Singh of Code but nothing was done. He said he feels neglected and something needs to be done.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Leonard Lightner presented a Power Point that includes:

> "Overview of 2025 Budget Status"
> "2026 Financial Projections"
> "Department Heads Update on 2025 Progress and 2026 Initiative"

He noted that the Budget Status includes modernizing IT, Interest Earnings, Pension State Aid. He also noted that Budget considerations include $3.3 million Revenue Gap. Additional Concerns are that Recreation expansion will incur additional labor and operation costs.

Kathy Pfister presented the 2026 Revenue Summary that included the Actual 2024 figure along with the 2025 Budget figure. The 2026 Preliminary total for the Taxes, Licenses and Permits, Fines, Interest/Rent, Intergovernmental, Changes/Fees for Services, Miscellaneous Revenue and the ARPA Funds is $44,801,965.

The Municipal Council Budget

Personnel Expenditures (Office of Administration, Legal Services, Support Services, Information Technician, Civic Activities, Youth Activities and Youth Engagement). Department of Administration: Notable Budget Changes (Staff, Additions/Changes. Continued focus on reinforcing Norristown's image and appeal (increased community outreach and engagement.) Council's Total Expenditures for the 2026 Budget is $104,493.

Mr. Lightner noted that only the Police Department has a Data Analyst. He said it's how policies are created. Councilman Queenan asked what would be the return on our investment and have we tried to analyze our data? Council Vice President Bates noted that there is software that makes it possible to evaluate the date and make adjustments. Mr. Lightner said there is not time for the Department Heads to analyze data. Councilwoman Robinson asked Mr. Lightner if the job description for the Data Analyst could be shared. Councilman Queenan said we are not optimized. Council Vice President Bates noted the Analyst would "help us to see what we don't see."

Mr. Lightner stated that the Capital Improvement requests for Administation/IT are a Digital Display Board, Honeycomb Camera Network, Network Switch Replacement, Surface Table Replacement, Workstation and Laptop Expansion/Replacement. The Total Expenditures for the 2026 Budget is $2,683,420.

Human Resources

Darlene Norwood, Human Resources Manager, presented the Personnel Expenditures and Operating Expenditures for Human Resources. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $2,439,838.

Notable Budget Changes: 2 part-time Front Desk Receptionists and funds added to the Budget for CPR Training for the Staff.

Parks & Recreation

Bri-Ana Hawkins presented the Personnel Expenditures and Operating Expenditures for the Recreation Department. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $1,152,229.

She noted the Summer Staff was increased and there are necessary repairs within the facilities. She added that the notable Budget changes are to add a Park Ranger and 6 additional part-time Summer Camp Staff members. Increase Budget to rising activities and transportation costs. A Special Events Coordinator under the Assumed Special Events Budget. Increased funding for Program expansion including Travel Basketball. Capital Improvement Requests include Skate Park, Elmwood Park improvements, Planning Phase Recreation Center, park lighting, Municipal Park Fencing Replacement, Ackey's Park Sports Field Upgrade, Thomas Barone Park Open Space Updates, Recreation Van replacement. Bri'Ana noted that there will be a "Friendsgiving" on November 25th.

Planning & Municipal Development

Jayne Musonye noted that the Planning Department is currently fully-staffed.

She noted that the Personnel Expenditures made a big jump and the Notable Budget Changes include a revamping of the Way-Finding Signage System. The Capital Improvement Requests include proposals coming next month for the analysis of the revamping of the Signage System especially at the Municipal entrances. Ms. Musonye noted that this could make an image change overnight if done in the correct way. She said that other considerations include design issues for the parks. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $1,506,684.

Fire

Chief Tom O'Donnell provided the Personnel and Operating Expenditures. He noted there is an Emergency Service Allocation and that the Notable Budget Changes include 3 Firefighters, an Administrative Assistant and Emergency Management Coordinator, increase contribution to Plymouth Ambulance/EMS Service, the Fire Pension Obligation. Capital Improvement Requests include a

Ladder Truck, Rescue Pumper, Modular Barrier/Trailer System, Fire Chief vehicle and a Boat Trailer and Drones. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $6,771,592.

Public Works

Mr. Odenigbo provided information about the Personnel Expenditures and Operating Expenditures for the Public Works Department including vehicle maintenance, building maintenance, waste collection, administration, street maintenance, traffic signs and signals, street lighting, parks. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $8,998,696. Notable Budget Changes include staff addition of a Right-of-Way Inspector and 6 Seasonal Laborers, increase funding for janitorial services for Municipal Hall and the Recreation Center, additional funding to fix problem curbs and sidewalks that haven't been corrected by property owners who will be billed, budget addition for Reclamite to apply to newly paved streets to extend the useful life. The CIP Requests include paving, 2 large dump trucks, a Public Works building on the State Hospital grounds, office space reconfiguration, street lighting/traffic signal replacement, Municipal Hall elevator replacement, 3 Public Works Vehicle replacements.

Police

Chief Trail presented the Police and Parking Enforcement Personnel and Operating Expenditures. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $18,380,141. He said their goal is to make an investment in the community and make it a safer place. The Notable Budget Changes include staff additions of a Deputy Chief, a Sergeant and 2 Parking Enforcement Officers. Staff reductions include a Patrol Officer, Clerical Staff and a Mental Health Coordinator. The Police Pension Obligation increased to $677,000. Capital Improvement requests include Parking Meter Stations, Parking Enforcement LPR, Police Vehicle Replacement: Community Relations/Parking Enforcement (4), Patrol Cars (2), SRO Vehicles (2), Detective (2), Police Transport Vehicle, Command Staff Vehicle, Prisoner Transport Van, spaces in the PD for staff.

Buildings & Code

Mr. Gordon noted that his department is fully staffed. He shared the Personnel and Operating Expenditures. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $1,692,237.

The Notable Budget Changes include an Integrated Permitting System. Capital Improvement Requests include Blighted Properties Demolition using $571,074 ARPA and a $300,000 Grant. He said the goal is to get all forms, etc. online.

Finance

Kathy Pfister provided the totals for the Personnel and Operating Expenditures, Finance Operation, Tax Collection and Debt Services. The 2026 Budget Total Expenditures is $4,471,348. The Notable Budget Changes include adding a Staff Accountant, funding for assistance with accounting system and implementation. Capital Improvement requests include an Accounting/General Ledger System, filing cabinets. The 2026 Preliminary Budget Estimate: General Fund for Revenue, ARPA, Expenditures, CIP Transfer, Fund Balance, Contracts, Staffing (next month there will be a proposal.) The funding sources for 2026 to 2030 were listed. The Capital Improvement Budget 5-year totals figure is $75,499,328. Other items include Budget Trends, Balancing Options which include reducing expenditures, increase taxes increase revenue, use Fund Balance and make Fee Schedule Changes. She noted that since tax increases have a negative effect on taxpayer morale, can opt to use Fund Balance and ARPA.

She noted Key Dates: November 5, 2025 – Propose Budget to Council.
November 9, 2025 - Budget available for review
November 18, 2025 – Request Advertising
December 2, 2025 - Potential Final Adoption of Budget

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Council Vice President Bates**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk of Council