

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2026

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, April 21, 2026 was called to order by Council President, Rashaad Bates, 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:

William McCoy
Mydera Robinson
Natalie Colson
Jasmine Griffen
David McMahan
Dustin Queenan
Rashaad Bates

Also in attendance were:

Jayne Musonye, Interim Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Michael Trail, Norristown Police Chief; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Sean Chin, Assistant to the Municipal Administrator; Keith Gordon, Code Enforcement Manager; Fire Chief Tom O'Donnell

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve the Minutes from the Monday, April 13, 2026 Rescheduled Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Bates announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to tonight's Council Meeting to discuss personnel issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Council Vice President Queenan:

He announced that there are headphones in the back for Spanish translation.

NAACP Norristown Community Forum, April 25th from 12 to 4 pm, 318 West Main Street. Call 484-774-0490.

The Blessing Shop, 318-320 Main Street, Norristown – May 2nd from 10 am to 2 pm. Food, prizes.

Town Hall for Councilman David McMahon on May 7th at the Hancock Fire Company at 6 pm.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

There will be no action for this item tonight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Patti Griffin, 1300 W. James Street - Ms. Griffin said that speeding is out of control in her area. She said the cars go 60 mph in a residential area with children and pets. She said there is also a park with a playground. She said there is no Police patrol. She asked where the Police are? She said that Parking Enforcement gives tickets for the spot she has been parking in for 24 years. She said she is a taxpayer.

Kayar Popat, 120 E. Main Street – He is a resident and a business owner. He said he did research regarding the Amusement Device Amendment and he is confused. He said there are exemptions but they are vaguely written.

Melvin Faust, 1228 West Airy Street – He returned again regarding speeding on Airy & Selma Streets. He said he spoke with Buck Jones who provided him with a

PennDOT map and found out that the intersection of Airy & Selma Streets is not PennDOT. He asked Council to do something such as speed traps or signs for slowing down traffic before something bad happens.

Caitlin Falco, 1302 West James Street – She said that James Street is not a highway but cars go about 40 mph and also go through the Stop Sign. She said the residents shouldn't have to have fear. She said her cat was run over and killed. She said that speed bumps would force the drivers to slow down.

Isac Arguelles, 571 West Marshall Street – He said he is a store owner. He said that covering their store windows gives them privacy and protection and that it is a matter of safety.

Jose Vargas, Jicome Restaurant – He said he puts the merchandise in the window to show his culture's business and it provides privacy. He said that Council should speak with the owners.

Denise Agurto – UNIDES, 335 West Marshall Street – She is speaking for the Latino Business Coalition. She said there is no communication or support for them or their language. She said the owners don't know about the Ordinance regarding store window signage. She asked Council to not vote until the owners get more information, possibly by having Town Halls.

POLICE

Resolution 26-33: Request for Municipal Council approval to promote an Officer to the rank of Corporal

Police Chief Trail said the promotion happened between the last 2 meetings. The swearing-in will be held at the next Council meeting.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson, to approve Resolution 26-33. The motion passed unanimously.**

Administration of Oath of Office for Police Corporal promotion

Judge Denise Ashe conducted the swearing-in ceremony for William Klinger.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Public Hearing to request the adoption of Ordinance 26-01 – Amusement Device Amendment

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen, to open the Public Hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

Solicitor Kilkenny explained the issue of “grandfathering.” He said if Council makes a change, the business would abandon the Use, not continue for a year, and then lose that right. He said it doesn’t change existing lawful Uses. He introduced the Exhibits: M1 copy of advertisement of Ordinance in the Times Herald on April 6th and 13th; M2 copy of Ordinance; M3 Montgomery County Planning Commission’s Review Letter dated March 18, 2026.

Director Musonye provided a background of the Ordinance. She noted that when it was first adopted, it was allowed in 4 Districts: NC, DR, TC and TC2 and LINU.

She noted that 4 or more Amusement Devices allowed by Special Exemption will be eliminated but if there are 3 or less, it will be allowed as an Accessory Use. She added that, with this Ordinance, it is allowed in the CR District by Council approval. She explained the Amendment requirements.

Public Comment:

Kayur Popat – He asked about having a business that is open 24 hours and how to get an exception.

Kaden Beegle – He said that these games are gambling that can cause an addiction just as alcohol and drug use. He said that businesses are taking advantage of people for profit.

Solicitor Kilkenny wanted to reiterate that Council is limiting skill games which are a lawful use and restricting the areas with tighter parameters. He said they can't be abolished because that would be unlawful.

Councilwoman Robinson asked for clarification about "grandfathering."

Solicitor Kilkenny explained that if the business had a previous lawful Use but it is abandoned for a year, it falls under the new law. He said that if the business was without required Permitting then the new Ordinance kicks in. He said it only applies with previous lawful Use.

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson, to close the Public Hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson, to adopt Resolution 26-01 to amend Chapter 320 (Zoning) of the Municipality of Norristown's General Laws to further regulate Amusement Devices and Arcade Uses within the Municipality. The proposed Amendments eliminate Amusement Devices and/or Arcades as a Permitted Primary Use in several Zoning Districts and allow such Uses in the Commercial Retail (CR) District only by Conditional Use, subject to specific location and operational standards. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing to request the adoption of Ordinance 26-02 – Window Signage Amendment

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen, to open the Public Hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

Solicitor Kilkenny introduced the following Exhibits: M1 – copy of advertisement of the Ordinance in the Times Herald on April 6th and 13th; M2 – MCPC Review Letter; M3 – Copy of Ordinance.

Director Musonye provided a history of the Ordinance. She noted that pamphlets explaining the Ordinance were prepared in English and Spanish for the business

owners. She explained that in 2025, it was decided what to amend and in February 2026, there was an advertisement of the amendment. She said that the current Zoning allows 5% of window coverage but many are exceeding that amount. She said the Police believe the excessive window coverage is a safety issue that can hinder emergency responses.

She said the amendment states that merchandise must be pushed in 5 feet. She said that enforcement can begin if the amendment is approved.

Public Comment:

Jose Vargas & Jessie Sanchez (translator) – He said he is against this. He said the Police need to check inside the business. He said he has his cash register next to the window and now will have to move it. He said he doesn't see the harm to anyone.

Isac Arguelles – He said it makes sense on paper but it is a burden for business owners. He believes the privacy gives them safety. He said he didn't get a notice.

Denisse Agurto – She said they need safety because ICE is everywhere and she said they can see inside. She said they feel safe inside. She said that Latinos represent 40% of Norristown's population.

Jim Chung – business owner for 3 years. He said you have to be concerned with seeing transactions with money through the window. He said there are cameras. He said the windows advertise the products. He said open window space makes it easier for the wrong people seeing them.

Kia Boynes – He asked how many robberies have there been already with these businesses? He said this restriction won't serve him.

Councilman McMahon suggested doing a community outreach because window shopping "is a thing." He requested tabling this item for a month.

Council Vice President Queenan commented that this amendment is being lenient. He said this is the Law.

Councilwoman Griffen said there are still a lot of questions and it doesn't hurt to put this off until next month.

Public Comment:

Synnita Griffen – she said the law was already in place but it wasn't enforced. She said since the law was already there, they must abide.

Kayden Beegle – He asked if there are any current Ordinances regarding glass fronts. He proposed replacing the glass with an opaque wall or a window around the doorway.

Jose Vargas and Jessie Sanchez – Mr. Vargas asked to show Council a phone photo of his display to show where his register is located. He said he has a sign that you can only see inside at night.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was **a motion by Councilman McMahon, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen**, to table this item. **The motion passed 5-2** (Councilwoman Robinson and Councilwoman Colson voted no.)

Public Hearing to request the adoption of Ordinance 26-03 – Smoke and Vape Shops Amendment

There was **a motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to open the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Solicitor Kilkenny introduced the Exhibits: M1 Copy of Ordinance Advertisement in the Times Herald; M2 Recommendation by the MCPC; M3 Copy of Ordinance 26-03.

Jayne Musonye provided a history of the Ordinance and specific conditions of Use.

There was no Public Comment.

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to adopt Ordinance 26-03 to amend Chapter 320 (Zoning) of the Municipality of Norristown's General Laws to create and define a "Significant Tobacco Retailer" Use and to establish standards governing smoke shops, vape shops, hookah bars and similar Uses within the Municipality. The proposed Amendments revise the Zoning definitions and permit significant tobacco retailers in the Commercial Retail (CR) District by Conditional Use only, subject to locational, operational and safety-related requirements. **The motion passed unanimously.**

FIRE

Resolution 26-31: Request for Council approval to provide health screenings for Fire Department personnel

Fire Chief O'Donnell said the Department was awarded a Federal Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) which has a 10% match that has been budgeted into the Fire Department's General Operating Budget. He said it promotes a culture of safety and wellness. He said this will cover 37 people, including Staff. He said the total is \$61,500 (over \$35,000 for medical testing, including screenings.)

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to approve Resolution 26-31. **The motion passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 26-32: Request for Municipal Council to amend the Stormwater Management Agreement with the Stormwater Authority

Director Musonye explained this will clarify establishing costs by the rates established by the Stormwater Authority.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to approve Resolution 26-32 authorizing the execution of a First Amendment to the existing Stormwater Management Agreement between the Norristown Stormwater Authority and the Municipality of Norristown, clarifying responsibilities related to system repairs, upgrades and improvements and establishing that such costs will be funded through User Rates collected by the Authority. **The motion passed unanimously.**

PARKS AND RECREATION

Resolution 26-37: Request for Municipal Council to approve the reclassifying of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to support the National Fitness Campaign Fitness Court Project

Mr. Sean Chin explained that some Funds need to be re-classified in order to complete the Fitness Court. He said the Fitness Set will be placed in Elmwood Park.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 26-37 to authorize the reclassification of previously allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to support the installation of a National Fitness Campaign Fitness Court within the Municipality of Norristown. This re-allocation will ensure that available funds are utilized efficiently to meet Grant-matching requirements, enhance public recreational infrastructure and promote community health and wellness through accessible outdoor fitness opportunities. **The motion passed unanimously.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Monthly Updates to Council

Recreation:

Cody Jones, Recreation Manager, presented a Power Point highlighting the Weekly Programs which includes Girls Group, Sabanita Soccer Club, Pickleball,

Bingo and Mens Softball League. In February, there will be a “Valentine’s Day Heart Hop.” In March, “Community Iftar & Salah.” April: Spring Egg Hunt.

He noted that “Upcoming” is: Summer Camp, Spring Basketball League (games start on April 28th). He said he appreciates his team members.

Police:

Chief Trail presented his first Quarterly Report. He said the goals that were met are Community engagement, mental health program for Officers, a new Records Management System, a “Girls in Blue” mentoring program. He said 2 sessions were held. NAACP Events; 2 Town Hall Events; 2 “Talk with a Cop” Events; Wellness Training for Officers; DS Training; CSU.

He said the blue and red lights on the Police vehicles make them easier to see from a distance. He provided the following statistics: violent crime down 71%, auto theft down 73%, overall crime rate down 32%. He said he will continue with adjustments in Quarter 2 and Quarterly Reports will be on the website along with crime mapping.

Finance:

Kathy Pfister shared that Real Estate Tax Collection ended this past month. She said that 75% of taxes were collected. She noted that Auditors will be here in May. She said a Finance Modeling System can do long-term planning which will be good for obtaining Bonds. She added it will help make Budget decisions and it will give a Bond-rating impact.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk of Council