

**NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY**  
**COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MAY 20, 2026**

The Council Work Session of Wednesday, May 20, 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:

Natalie Colson  
Jasmine Griffen  
David McMahan  
Dustin Queenan  
Rashaad Bates

Also in attendance were:

Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Michael Trail, Norristown Police Chief; Corporal Ed Gergel, Norristown Police Department; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Tom O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Sean Chin, Officer of Special Projects and Interagency Affairs; Stevens Shehu, Junior Planner; Keith Gordon, Code Enforcement Manager

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson, to approve the Minutes from the May 5, 2026 Council Meeting. The motion passed 5-0.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

From Council Vice President Queenan:

He announced that anyone needing translation for Spanish can see Jess for headphones in the back.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ben Zhuang, Owner of business at 506 West Marshall Street, Norristown – He said the business is a Dollar shop. He said his tenant asked him to come to Council. He said they appreciate that Council wants to make the area look beautiful. He said some things should not be near the window but it depends on what you are putting there. He said the grocery store across the street looks beautiful because you know what they are selling. He said it is not offensive to someone walking on the street.

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street, Norristown – He had a book related to the damage to the rivers. He explained about the Army Corps of Engineers and the fact that the flood gauge in Norristown was turned off in 1933 and turned back on in 2001. He spoke about the DEP and the flood plain, the Toll Brothers are trying to fill in a flood plain at Betzwood. This could cause damage at the Sewer Plant. He said that someone at the Sewer Plant said that Ida cost Norristown \$400,000.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Montgomery County presentation for 2026 Montco Forever Green Open Space Grant**

Bill Hartman, Montgomery County Planning Commission, headed the presentation. He said the Power Point is “purely informational.” The slide presentation included “Open Space Legacy” and “Open in Montgomery County – Why create a Program?” It is to improve funding awareness, formalize the process and outcomes and expand the Open Space definitive. He added there are lower Match requirements. Next was “Montco Forever Green Overview” regarding conservation easements and funding. The “Program Requirements and

Criteria” included 25% Match, public access for ecological reasons and flexibility for applicants. “Eligible Open Space Projects/Uses”: Open Space comes in many different ways such as urban plazas and to provide funding for all types of projects, places, uses and activities. “Project Evaluation” – Holistic Project Evaluation, Finance & Equity. “Application Process”. He added that “Open Space” comes in many different forms. He said to contact them with any potential ideas.

## **MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

Solicitor Kilkenny asked Council to make a motion to open the Agenda.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to open the Agenda to consider an appeal of 2 Zoning Hearing Board Applications. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Solicitor Kilkenny asked Council to consider a recommendation to make a motion to send the Solicitor to appeal Zoning Hearing Board Applications 13-26 and 14-26 for 1314 Dekalb Street.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahan**, to send the Solicitor to appeal the Zoning Hearing Board Applications 13-26 and 14-26 for 1314 Dekalb Street.

**There was no Public Comment.**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahan**, to close the agenda. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**The motion to send the Solicitor passed 5-0.**

**Resolution 26-23: Request for Council approval of the Annual Service Renewal with CivicPlus, LLC, for Municipal Website, SeeClickFix 311 System and Civic Engagement Platforms in the amount of \$55,119.27**

Sean Chin explained this is for the annual subscription.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to approve Resolution 26-23 for payment of the annual invoice for the Municipality's website services, civic engagement platforms and digital communication tools. These services support resident service requests, public records management, website hosting, communication with residents and other online Municipal functions for the period December 16, 2025 through December 15, 2026. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**Resolution 26-44: Request for Municipal Council approval of the appointment of Legis Group, LLC, as Solicitor for the Civil Service Commission**

Solicitor Kilkenny explained there is an interview process and that Council can approve or disapprove. He noted that the engagement letter is in line with Budget recommendations.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen**, to approve Resolution 26-44 to appoint Legis Group LLC as Solicitor for the Norristown Civil Service Commission for the remainder of calendar year 2026 and to authorize execution of the associated engagement letter. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**FIRE**

**Resolution 26-38: Request for Municipal Council to approve the purchase of (2) Camera Trailers**

Fire Chief O'Donnell noted the cost is \$166,800 and it is 100% funded through the LSA Grant Initiative. He said they would work closely with the Norristown Police Department and that these trailers comply with existing camera equipment.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve Resolution 26-38 to approve the purchase of (2) Camera Trailers for emergency and non-emergency usage within the Municipality of Norristown. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Resolution 26-43: Request for Municipal Council to approve ratifying the purchase from National Fitness Campaign LP for Fitness Court Equipment**

Mr. Chin said this is for the Purchase Order in the amount of \$175,000.00.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to approve Resolution 26-43 to ratify the purchase from National Fitness Campaign LP for the acquisition of Fitness Court equipment and related campaign resources for the Fitness Court project at Elmwood Park and to ensure compliance with the Municipality's Administrative Code. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Ordinance 26-02: Request to adopt Ordinance 26-02: Window Signage Amendment**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to table this item. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**Presentation for proposed House of Worship development at 336-338 East Airy Street**

Mr. Shehu of Planning invited the Applicants to present the proposal.

There was a Power Point by John Panizza. He said he will be working with Planning and Municipal Council as they go through the process. He introduced the Team: Dan Lyons, Attorney; Dany Yazbeck, Professional Engineer; Mark Pagenkopf, Minister; Sponsors: Jim & Laurie Hess.

He said they have met with Planning in considering this Use and the best way to make it serve the Norristown residents.

He said that one of the things that came up in meeting with Norristown is Tax Revenues. He noted they will not be applying for Tax Abatement.

He said that Dan Lyons would be covering the Use & the particulars of the process. He said at the end of the presentation, they would like to request support.

Mr. Lyons discussed the Zoning Hearing Board application for the property located in a TC2 District. He said they are asking for Relief for the Use of the Church in this District on the undersized lot. He added that the building fits well on the lot. He said the Impervious surface is down to 54% which allows some Green Space and landscaping. He noted the Church is for Spanish-speaking residents.

Solicitor Kilkenny asked Mr. Lyons how long would the tax relief be in effect to which Mr. Lyons responded, "in perpetuity."

Engineer, Dany Yazbeck, provided more information about the Plans. She noted that they are proposing a 2400 square foot House of Worship with an associated covered porch, walkways, sidewalks, ADA Accessibility, landscaping for beautification as well as a lawn area. She said there would also be a drop-off area behind the site.

Mark Pagenkopf, Minister, King of Prussia Church of Christ, provided background information including their involvement with "Coalition to Save Lives." He said they have an interest due to a need in the Spanish-speaking population. He said they chose to decide to move to Norristown from King of Prussia because there are many in the Norristown area who have transportation issues.

Councilman McMahon asked about the drop-off area and what it would look like the day of Services.

Council Vice President Queenan asked about the parking and he was told there is no parking requirement for this project.

Mark said that other Churches in the area said it will be a "slow go" for 18 to 20 months so he doesn't think parking will be an issue in the beginning.

Councilwoman Colson also asked about the availability of parking and was told there is no parking at the site.

Mark said they will work with Council to address any issues. He said they are asking for support.

Solicitor Kilkenny explained that for Zoning Relief, Council doesn't usually take a position but can offer support, no position or oppose.

Councilwoman Griffen asked if the applicants spoke with neighbors about the project and Mark said he will be doing that.

Mark added that the loading area can be temporary parking during Services.

Council said they are taking a neutral position and asked the applicants to come back about parking issues and neighbor feedback.

### **Presentation for 722 Sandy Hill Development and Zoning Text Discussion**

John Benson noted they were in front of the Zoning Hearing Board 4 years ago for this property. He presented a slide presentation which showed 36 townhomes for sale with private roads. He b it is zoned Multi-Family Residential. He said they do not require a density Variance and that they received a Variance regarding height. He said they still need 3 or 4 Variances regarding distances and buffers. He said they are requesting a Text Amendment to add "rowhouse". He said it allows more road design.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to direct Staff to work with the Zoning Hearing Board to make a Text Amendment in the Ordinance to include "rowhouse". **The motion passed 5-0.**

### **Ordinance 26-04: Request to advertise Data Center Ordinance**

Solicitor Kilkenny noted that Ordinances have been drafted regarding Data Centers. He said they can't be banned but there can be restrictions on them. He noted that if there is a motion to advertise, there would need to be a Public Hearing and an Adoption consideration.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McMahon**, to advertise Ordinance 26-04 amending Chapter 320 of the General Laws of Norristown to establish regulations for Data Centers and related Accessory Uses within the HI Heavy Industrial Zoning District by Conditional Use. **The motion passed 5-0.**

## **POLICE**

### **Resolution 26-42: Request for Council to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces**

Police Chief Trail said this is a yearly review.

**There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen**, to approve Resolution 26-42 establishing Handicapped Parking Spaces at the following addresses:

544 Green Street  
544 E. Main Street  
528 Stanbridge Street  
911 W. Lafayette Street  
1134 Markley Street  
1532 Powell Street  
1211 Locust Street  
566 Noble Street Apt. 1  
602 W. Marshall Street Apt. R1  
1 East Basin Street  
804 E. Fornance Street  
436 E. Spruce Street

To remove Handicapped Parking Spaces at the following addresses:

1717 Willow Street  
614 Haws Avenue  
644 E. Moore Street  
311 Buttonwood Street

915 West Airy Street

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Griffen**, to approve Resolution 26-42. **The motion passed 5-0.**

**Monthly Updates to Council: Presenting Department – Code.** (Administration & Public Works moved to the next Meeting.)

Mr. Gordon presented his monthly report in a slide presentation which included the “Summary Permit Report”, “Operation Summary Report Enforcement”, “Click Fix”, “Violations Issued” (Owner-Occupied & Rentals); there were 47 Training Hours for Staff; 4 Community Outreaches”, 62 “Assisted Other Agencies”; “Department Projects.”

Councilman McMahon said he would like to see “researchable rental information.”

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo  
Clerk of Council