

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2019

The Council Meeting of November 19, 2019 was called to order by Council Vice President Heather Lewis at 7:30 PM in Council Chambers.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**. The following Council members were present:

Olivia Brady

Hakim Jones

Derrick Perry

Rebecca Smith

Heather Lewis

Also present were: Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Police Department; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development, Norman Butts, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works, Amrinder Singh, Codes and Building Manager.

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the Council Minutes from November 6, 2019. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council Vice-President Lewis announced that Council met in Executive Session to discuss litigation issues.

PRESENTATIONS:

MURAL ARTS PROGRAM

Councilwoman Brady requested that the Ordinance be amended to allow murals in Norristown. She explained the proposed murals can be voted on by residents before they come before Council. She said she will reach out to the Mural Arts organization and work with the Solicitor regarding the Ordinance amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilman Perry announced that Municipal Hall will be closed on Thursday, November 28th and Friday, November 29th for the Thanksgiving holiday.

DOG LICENSING EVENTS – provided by the office of Montgomery County Treasurer Jason Salus and hosted by State Representative Matt Bradford. December 3rd at Rep. Bradford’s Office, 750 E. Johnson Hwy., Norristown, from 10 am to 1 pm and December 4th at Rep. Bradford’s Office, 2000 Bustard Road, Cedars, PA from 10 am to 1 pm.

PLYMOUTH AMBULANCE 10TH ANNUAL OPERATION CHRISTMAS KIDS TOY RUN. Sunday, December 15th at 1:00 pm. Bring new, unwrapped toys for donation.

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL WASTE AUTHORITY is relocating to 25 East Marshall Street, Norristown on December 9th.

ANNUAL TURKEY DRIVE – sponsored by the “Norristown Men of Excellence” on Sunday, November 24th from 3 to 6 pm. First come, first served.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ivory Thompkins, 1122 Markley Street, Norristown – She shared that the basements are flooded on the 1100 block, especially the even side ever since the Markley Street project construction. She said she has called the Municipality about it. Also, the bar in that area is littered with trash and bottles. She asked that the Police be present at closing time. Councilman Perry suggested that the State should be contacted.

Joyce Edwards, 1126 Markley Street, Norristown – She shared the same concerns as Ms. Thompkins. She noted that homes are being destroyed.

Erica Tuggle, 1128 Markley Street, Norristown – She added that the neighbors are suffering and have lost a lot. She said the drains are filled with debris.

Loretta Evans, 625 E. Basin Street – Ms. Evans voiced her complaint about a proposed Dollar General “on top of a dam.” There are water issues and cars speeding. She also said there are several dollar stores in the area.

Vickie Hodo, 544 E. Basin Street – She has been a resident for 42 years. She said the rain comes down the hill to Basin Street and floods the houses. She does not want the Dollar General.

Dottie Bolinsky, 707 E. Fornance Street – She is opposed to the Dollar General and the proposed entrance on Fornance Street which would have a blind spot and it will increase traffic.

Charmane Lever, 1217 Willow Street, Norristown – She came to the meeting about a handicapped ramp request, which is on the agenda for later in the meeting.

Marvin Wallace, 538 E. Basin Street – Mr. Wallace remarked that a Dollar General is considered low-income and property values will diminish. He said they are not considering the people who live here.

Jamil Butler, 608 E. Basin Street – He asked what is the “return on investment” for the residents with this Dollar General project and what is the benefit to the community? He also had concerns with kids crossing the street. He asked to vote it down.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Request for Preliminary/Land Development approval for 600 E. Fornance Street – Dollar General Store #20915

(this was moved up on the agenda)

The attorney for the Dollar General provided an overview of the proposed project. He also noted they are now asking for a Preliminary Land Development approval not a Preliminary/Final. He stated they are presently compliant with the Zoning Ordinance and is seeking relief from 2 Waivers out of 13 proposed.

Council voiced their concerns with the project such as the lack of healthy food choices and the minimal benefit to the neighborhood.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to deny the request for Preliminary Land Development approval for 600 E. Fornance Street – Dollar General Store by JLM Real Estate Investments. **Motion passed unanimously.**

COMMUNICATION

There were no Communication items.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Update and Discussion on the possibility of utilizing a Land Bank for Norristown

Crandall Jones provided information about the land banking legislation that was passed by the State Assembly. There was discussion about the possibility of entering into an agreement with the Redevelopment Authority, costs, funding and a timeline.

There was **a motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to direct staff to obtain information about the utilization of a Land Bank for Norristown. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Request to advertise Ordinance No. 19-13 – Decriminalization of Marijuana

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Brady, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to advertise Ordinance No. 19-13 and to set the fine at \$25.00. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Municipal Hall Renovation Final Design Update & Approval of Resolution 19-159 Geotechnical Services Proposal

Doug Seiler, Architect, conducted a Power Point presentation concerning the Municipal Hall renovation final design update.

There was **a motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the final design and to approve Resolution 19-159 Geotechnical Services Proposal. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion on bidding of Solid Waste Contracts

There was a Power Point presentation by Crandall Jones and Thomas Odenigbo regarding the changes to the solid waste bidding documents and contract with Mascaro & Sons which expires on March 31, 2020.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to advertise the next solid waste contract with Mascaro & Sons. **Motion passed unanimously.**

BUILDING AND CODES ENFORCEMENT

October 2019 HARB Certificates of Appropriateness

There was **a motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the October 2019 HARB Certificates of Appropriateness. **Motion passed unanimously.**

FIRE

Resolution 19-156 Kid's Fire Safety House Purchase

There was a motion by Councilwoman Brady, seconded by Councilman Perry, to approve Resolution 19-156 Kid's Fire Safety House Purchase. **Motion passed unanimously.**

HUMAN RESOURCES

Resolution 19-157 to amend the PMRS pension plan

There was a motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Smith, to pass Resolution 19-157 amending the PMRS pension plan to define full-time employees – 40 hours per week and specify the bargaining unit whose members are eligible for the plan – AFSCME clerical/technical unit – Local 317. **Motion passed unanimously.**

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency grant application – request for authorization to submit grant application

Chief Talbot explained that this covers 2 years at \$85,000 per year.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady, to authorize the submission of the grant application to fund a consultant to serve as the At-Risk Youth Care Coordinator to the Norristown Area Children's HUB.

Residential Parking Permit Discussion for Development Proposal for 412 Dekalb Street

Director Musonye explained that the parking study is not available. She added that this will be brought back to the December Council Workshop Meeting.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady, to table this item. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Request to install handicapped ramp in public sidewalk at 1217 Willow Street

There was a motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Brady, to authorize the Solicitor to form an agreement with the owner of 1217 Willow Street in order to approve the installation of a handicapped ramp in the public sidewalk. **Motion passed unanimously.**

POLICE

Resolution 19-154: Government Lease Purchase

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to approve Resolution 19-154 authorizing the government lease-purchase agreement no. 001-0712550-301 dated as of July 5, 2019 with TCF National Bank for a Polaris Ranger Crew XP 1000 and related equipment for the Norristown Police Department. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 19-155: Handicap Parking

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to approve Resolution 19-155 establishing handicap parking at the following addresses: 381 E. Lafayette Street and 1425 Powell Street. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Solicitor Kilkenny explained that Council needs to choose whether or not to opt-in or opt-out of the Opioid Litigation Class Action Settlements.

There was a **motion by Councilman Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis**, to open Public Comment. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to close Public Comment. **Motion passed unanimously.**

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to opt out of the Opioid Litigation Class Action Settlements. **Motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT:

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Brady**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo, Clerk of Council