

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING
May 5, 2020

The virtual Council Meeting of May 5, 2020 was called to order by Council President Derrick Perry at 7:30 PM by way of the GoToMeeting.com application.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**. The following Council members were connected to the online meeting.

Valerie Scott-Cooper
Thomas Lepera

Hakim Jones
Rebecca Smith

Sonya Sanders
Derrick Perry

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

Motion to Approve Minutes

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the Minutes of the April 21, 2020 virtual Council Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Executive Session Announcement

Council President Perry announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel and real estate matters.

Public Comment

Christina Steward, 528 Hamilton Street – Ms. Steward sent an email asking, “Is there some way we can have a Police speed display on the 500 block of Hamilton Street?” She added that all day long cars speed down the street and there are many children in the area.

John Blystone (no address provided) – Mr. Blystone sent an email commenting, “Please open up Riverfront Park! Or at least the boat ramp!” He added that boating is a safe activity that can be done with social distancing.

Announcements

COVID-19 – Please continue with safe practices such as hand washing, covering face, wearing masks and social distancing. There is a Community Testing Site at the Norristown Regional Health Center, 1401 Dekalb Street. Appointments are needed from 11 am to 1 pm daily. Keep updated with the COVID-19 dashboard on the Municipal website.

Presentations

Proclamation recognizing May as Building Safety Month

This is the 3rd annual celebration of Building Safety Month. Crandall Jones thanked the Code Enforcement team for making sure properties are maintained and safe.

Presentation by Valarie Cofield, President/CEO, of Eastern Minority Supplier Development Council

Ms. Cofield provided information from her video presentation. She explained that the EMSDC creates opportunities for minority-owned businesses in PA, Southern NJ and DE which help increase the tax base and increase jobs.

Planning and Municipal Development

Ordinance 20-09 – A Public Hearing to consider an adoption of amending Chapter 320 titled, “Article XIII titled “TC Town Center District” to require certain existing uses be permitted by Conditional Use rather than by Special Exception

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders, to open the Public Hearing. There was a Roll Call Vote. The motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Musonye explained that staff recommended giving the authority to Municipal Council to approve the Conditional Use.

Solicitor Kilkenny introduced the exhibits as follows: M1 – copy of Ordinance, M2 – copy of Advertisement, M3 – copies of the recommendations of the Montgomery County Planning Commission and Norristown Planning Commission.

There was no Public Comment.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilman Lepera, to approve Ordinance 20-09. There was a Roll Call Vote. The motion passed 6-0.

Authorization for the Municipal Solicitor, Kilkenny Law, LLC, to appear before the May 26th Norristown Zoning Hearing Board Meeting and defend a substantive validity challenge of Ordinance 20-03 filed by KKR Investments, LLC. Ordinance 20-03 of 2020 amended certain provisions of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to signage for convenience stores with gasoline pumps.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilwoman Smith, to authorize the Municipal Solicitor to appear before the May 26th Norristown Zoning Hearing Board Meeting. The motion passed 6-0.

Resolution 20-35 – Authorize the use of General Funds to advance CDBG-CV grant funds for assistance to qualifying local businesses

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Jones, to approve Resolution 20-35. There was a Roll Call Vote. The motion passed 6-0.

Finance

Ordinance 20-10 authorizing the issuance of General Obligation Debt

Mr. Butts provided an explanation of the issuance of three series of General Obligation Bonds or Notes to be sold to Robert W. Baird & Co. in order to finance various capital projects including Municipal Building renovations, the refunding of portions of the outstanding 2006 Note, 2017 A Note and 2017 AAA Bonds and reimbursement for land purchased for economic development and further permits Municipal officials, staff and professionals to take any actions necessary and appropriate to effectuate the financing.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilman Jones, to approve Ordinance

20-10. There was a Roll Call Vote. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Human Resources

Resolution 20-32 – Amend and restate Met Life 457(b) Retirement Plan

There was a motion by Councilman Lepera, seconded by Councilwoman Smith, to approve Resolution 20-32 to retain RPSI to provide document and other services related to the administration of the plan. There was a Roll Call Vote. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Municipal Administrator

Waiver of potential conflict by all parties in Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel LLP with respect to the preparation of a construction contract for the Norristown Municipal Building for Gorski Construction

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilman Lepera, to approve the Waiver of potential conflict. **The motion passed 6-0.**

A motion to authorize staff to advertise Public Meetings/Hearings to receive public input related to the possible sale of the Municipality of Norristown's Sanitary Sewer System to Aqua Pennsylvania Wastewater, Inc. for \$82,000,000.

Mr. Jones explained that Council would decide on use of the funds and that the Norristown Municipal Waste Authority and West Norriton Township were notified of this request to advertise Public Meetings/Hearings. He added that the first meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2020.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilman Lepera, to authorize staff to advertise Public Meetings/Hearings. A Roll Call Vote was taken. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Departmental Reports

Mr. Odenigbo, Public Works Director, shared the activities of his department for the past month. He noted the street cleaning continued, there was pest control done at the parks, potholes were repaired, inlets were cleaned. He divided his staff into 3 shifts for social distancing purposes.

Mr. Crandall Jones reported on the following: the Public Information Officer, Kevin Tustin, is doing a great job; there are weekly briefings with government and state officials regarding operations during the pandemic with Staff submitting contingency plans; equipment will be used to sanitize the Fire, Police and Public Works vehicles as well as the Municipal buildings; Land Development documents for the parking lot will be available at the next meeting; assessment for the State Hospital continues as well as RFPs for DeLuca properites and information regarding the next Hauling contract.

Mr. Jones introduced his Special Assistant, Lisa Howdyshell, who is also the Executive Director of Keeping Norristown Beautiful. Lisa provided an update for KNB. She noted there was an Advisory Board Meeting on April 6th to discuss goals which included plans for a Clean-Up date in September through December. She stated that Kevin Tustin took photos of illegal dumping areas and they are looking for Block Beautification captains.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion to adjourn the virtual Council Meeting by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper. The motion passed 6-0.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Roseann M. Santangelo, Clerk of Council