

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, November 4, 2020

The Council Meeting of November 4, 2020 was called to order by Council President Derrick Perry at 7:30 PM by way of the virtual gotomeeting.com application.

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

Valerie Scott-Cooper
Thomas Lepera

Hakim Jones
Rebecca Smith

Sonya Sanders
Derrick Perry

Heather Lewis

Also tuned in were: Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Police Chief; Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Development; Norman Butts, Director of Finance; Amrinder Singh, Code Manager, Erica Genuardi, Director of Parks & Recreation.

Motion to Approve Minutes

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Council Vice-President Smith**, to approve the Council Workshop Minutes from October 20, 2020. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Session Announcement

Council President Perry announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss litigation and real estate issues.

Announcements:

Today is the last day to apply for rent and mortgage assistance through Pennsylvania's Housing and Finance Agency. Go to [Phfa.org/pacares](https://phfa.org/pacares).

Extended hours for free COVID-19 Testing. Norristown Site - 1401 Dekalb Street – Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10 am to 1 pm, Tuesday and Thursday from 2 pm to 5 pm. Call 610-970-2937 or visit montcopa.org/Covid-19.

The Municipality is seeking public input regarding the 2021 Budget Process. Send any questions or comments to pio@norristown.org. All documents as well as videos of public hearings are available on norristown.org.

Judge Greg Scott is partnering with The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium and the Norristown Ministerium to provide free COVID-19 testing, free flu shots, free masks and free hand sanitizer on Thursday, November 5th from 3 pm to 7 pm at the Siloam Baptist Church and Mt. Zion AME Church, 1329 Willow Street, Norristown.

“Help a Single Parent” and the Norristown Fire Department will hold their 6th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Drive for 100 Norristown families in need. See Councilwoman Scott-Cooper or Councilwoman Sanders or call 610-292-8281 or email todonnell@norristown.org.

Public Comment

Harrison Farina, 327 S Trooper Rd., Norristown

Please stop the sale of the Norristown Sewer Authority to Aqua America. This profiteering company has their hands dirty. We cannot

sell Norristown's most valuable material asset to this company. It belongs to the people of Norristown, whom it is supposed to serve, not a foreign company who will use it to make profits by raising rates on us. I cannot afford the rate increases that Aqua is proposing and is notorious around the area for doing. This is happening in more places than just Norristown and we have to put a stop to it! I urge the council to do whatever you can to save us from this bad, predatory deal. The long-time citizens of Norristown will pay in the long run.

Doug Seiler, 420 DeKalb St.

Dear Members of Norristown Municipal Council,

I located my business in downtown Norristown twenty years ago, because I believed then and still do today, that Norristown's best days are in the future. I find the town's history to be extraordinary and its intrinsic characteristics varied and wonderful. Tonight I'd like to urge you to keep the Historic HARB ordinance essentially as it is written.

1. Norristown's two Nationally Recognized Districts define boundaries which are separated into an A and a B Zone. This feature allows for looser interpretations within the B zone. The A zones are Norristown's "gateways" and the B zones are where people live. Both are important and should be kept, as it is their combination that contributes to a better quality of life and enhances property values. I feel that the Standards on windows and roof materials in the B Zone could be loosened, with little impact on both goals.
2. The HARB Board is meant to be a wide cross section of the Community. I hope the focus the HARB is receiving will encourage the people to volunteer to join the Board. A diversity of race, creed, outlook, age and perspective will only help our endeavors.
3. Many communities throughout America have, since the 1960s, instituted HARBs. It is well-documented that HARBs improve property values, stabilize neighborhoods and improve the quality of life of their residents. This is because it encourages investment in the exterior appearance of neighborhoods and protects the investments that people make.
4. Preservation is a job creation tool: It is labor-intensive & needs to be done on-site.
5. The founding President of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, Dick Tyler, a Norristown native and famous preservationist, answered the question "Why do I want a HARB ordinance regulating MY property?" with the reply "You don't! You want the HARB to keep your neighbor from degrading the community and harming the value of the investment you made in your property, by messing up his/her house."

In many ways, that sentiment is as true today as it was in the 1960s when he first said it. Please keep the HARB intact, perhaps ease the standards within the B Zone and bring more voices onto our Board.

(Note: Comment was received after the public comment submission deadline for the Oct. 20 meeting).

Finance

Resolution 20-94: Adopt 2021 Consolidated Fee Schedule

Norman Butts, Finance Director, provided a brief outline.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders**, to approve Resolution 20-94. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Parks & Recreation

Resolution 20-98: Enter into a Purchase Agreement with Toto's Heating & Cooling for the purchase and installation of 4 HVAC units at the Recreation Center

Erica Genuardi, Parks & Recreation Director, provided details about the Purchase Agreement.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Sanders, seconded by Council Vice-President Smith**, to approve Resolution 20-98 to purchase 3 HVAC units that were a total loss due to the flood on August 4, 2020 and 1 HVAC unit that failed prior to the flood on the main floor. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Police

Resolution 20-92: Motion to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces

Police Chief Talbot noted that the requests are to establish Handicapped Parking spaces at the following addresses:

423 East Moore Street
213 Chain Street
1224 Arch Street

Chief Talbot explained that these residents demonstrated physical limitations.

There was a motion by Council Vice-President Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders, to approve Resolution 20-92. The motion passed unanimously.

Municipal Administrator

Resolution 20-97: Authorizing a Lease Agreement between Norristown Center Condominium and the Municipality of Norristown for temporary administrative space and temporary furniture storage

Mr. Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator, provided the information regarding the Lease Agreement.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis, to approve a Lease Agreement with Norristown Center A, LP for temporary administrative space in Suite 104 at the Norristown Center Condominium. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 20-95: Authorizing the purchase of used furniture and furnishings from Corbett, Inc. in the amount of \$23,000 to furnish temporary space for the Municipality's administrative operations during Municipal Hall renovations

Mr. Crandall Jones provided details about the purchase.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders, to approve the purchase of used furniture and furnishings for temporary Municipal administrative operations at Logan Square. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 20-96: Ratification of the purchase of an emergency generator from Modern Power Systems in the amount of \$189,919.00 which was approved by Municipal Council at the October 20, 2020 Council Meeting

Mr. Crandall Jones explained that this was previously approved and now will be memorialized in a Resolution.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis, to ratify the purchase of an emergency generator from Modern Power Systems in the amount of \$189,919.00. The motion passed unanimously.

Departmental Reports

Monthly Report to update Council on October 2020 activities within presenting departments: Tonight is Public Works and Administration

The Public Works report was moved to a future meeting.

Crandall Jones provided the activities for Administration for October 2020. A 4th meeting of the Budget Hearings, held in the evening, was attended by a few residents; monthly discussions continue with the Deputy Secretary of the Department of General Services working on a conveyance of the State Hospital grounds; also working with the RDA to convey the property to them on the Municipality's behalf; spent time with the Municipal Solicitor in terms of making sure the language of that conveyance is in compliance with the State and with Council so that an RFP can be sent out. The RDA will be attending a Council meeting in the near future to designate the property as a redevelopment area; spoke with the Community Garden group of the State Hospital regarding identifying a new location - they currently have an extension until April 2021; dealt with flood damage insurance; dealt with Sewer Authority matters; Habitat for Humanity has a new Director - considering Willow Street; met with SEPTA's former Commissioner, Leslie Richards, who is studying and working on the issue of the impact of the proposed High Speed Line. Mr. Jones suggested to make Norristown the focus because of the importance to the community, to which they agreed. There will be an in-depth analysis of how the High Speed Line to King of Prussia would impact Norristown along with issues of Transit-Oriented Development; participated in the National League of Cities conference; "Keep Norristown Beautiful" is moving along – they had a Halloween event; had the first meeting with the new Labor Union for Public Works employees to begin labor negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion to adjourn the virtual Council Meeting by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis. The motion passed unanimously.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo, Clerk of Council