

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL WORK SESSION
JUNE 15, 2021

The Council Work Session of June 15, 2021 was called to order by Council Vice President Thomas Lepera at 6:30 PM in the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23, 2 West Lafayette Street, 1st Floor, Norristown, PA.

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

Valerie Moman
Heather Lewis

Hakim Jones
Rebecca Smith

Sonya Sanders
Thomas Lepera

Also present were: Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Amrinder Singh, Code Manager.

Motion to approve Minutes

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Moman, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Minutes from June 1, 2021. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Executive Session

Council did not meet in Executive Session prior to the Work Session.

Presentations

Stormwater Advisory Committee Update by Bruce Hulshizer of Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

Mr. Hulshizer provided a brief report by the Stormwater Advisory Committee after meeting with the stakeholders. The costs of permit requirements for projects, pollution reduction, maintenance of the sewer system and addressing problem areas could be covered by charging a Stormwater Fee. The amount of the fee came about from the single family residence taxable assessed value and impervious area which varies based on communities. The fee could be developed around Tiers with Tier 1 being less impervious. Public Meetings could be scheduled to inform residents as well as mailing a “draft bill.” When asked if no fee is implemented or taxes aren’t increased, what would happen? Mr. Hulshizer said that the Municipality would not meet permit requirements.

Announcements

“Juneteenth” celebration by the NAACP at Elmwood Park Zoo on Saturday, June 19th from 1pm to 4 pm.

Public Comment

James Watters – Mr. Watters is concerned with road construction stopping access to the hospital and also the damage to the Recreation Center. He focused on Whitehall Road and Stergiere Street issues due to the West Norriton Pumping Station being flooded. He asked PennDOT what the damage was on Whitehall but they said they do not keep records. He has been in communication with the Montgomery County Emergency Management Services and noted that PennDOT is not stopping the flooding. He noted that the Stony Creek condos are flooded and PennDOT is not keeping up with the debris under the bridge. He wants to speak with

Congresswoman Dean and FEMA regarding their obligation to stop the flooding because there are many fatalities due to driving on flooded roads.

Anthony Uhrich, Rosemont Avenue – Mr. Uhrich asked that if a stormwater fee is implemented, will the storm drains be cleaned out? Will there be a discount for those who collect water? Crandall Jones responded “yes” to both. He repeated his previous concerns from August 22, 2018 – Hazardous conditions at Main & Hartranft. Also, the four corners at Rosemont and Washington have no accessible Handicapped curb cuts. He also asked that the alley where he has to dig out of because of snow left from the plows be made public.

Kurt Martin, 245 Buttonwood Street – Mr. Martin stated he has been complaining for 3 years about flooding causing damage to property and 2 cars being totaled.

Municipal Administrator

Request for Council to approve Ordinance 21-06 establishing the Norristown Stormwater Authority

Municipal Administrator, Crandall Jones, noted that this Ordinance has been advertised and has met requirements and was reviewed by the Municipal Solicitor. If approved, a swearing-in of members will take place.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders**, to approve Ordinance 21-06 establishing a Norristown Stormwater Authority. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Update to Municipal Council on the American Rescue Plan Act

Crandall Jones noted this is an infusion of resources to help rebuild the economy as the country recovers. He stated that funds to Norristown total \$20,140,216 paid in 2 installments with the second in 2022. The Municipality must be obligated to projects by 2024 and spent by 2026. He asked Council to forward ideas for uses of funds and he suggested big impactful projects. After the list of projects is compiled, there will be Public Meetings for residential feedback.

Building & Codes Enforcement

Notification of Barbados Island Flood Hazard Revisions

Christen Pionzio, a representative for The Audubon Land Development Corp. explained the changes to the current Municipality of Norristown’s FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) Panel 42091C0351G and the fact that property owners along the Schuylkill River and Stony Creek and Municipal Council must be informed of such changes to correct the flood plain in and around Barbados Island. The study was approved by the engineer. The Municipality must sign off to acknowledge these changes.

There was a **motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Moman**, to approve the study’s findings. **The motion passed 6-0.**

ProChamps Contract Agreement

Code Manager, Amrinder Singh, noted that contact information assigned by the bank for properties being foreclosed upon has been updated. He asked for approval of a 2 year contract with ProChamps with a 1 year renewal option and the right to terminate at the end of 30 days.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Moman**, to approve a new Professional Services Agreement with Property Registration Champions, LLC (ProChamps) for foreclosure

property registration and related services. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Review proposed updates and amendments to Chapter 241 (Property Transfer and Sewer Lateral Inspections)

Mr. Singh explained that a proposed amendment to Property Transfers would be the elimination of the registration fee and inspection fee if within 60 days of new construction.

Mr. Singh also noted that after meeting twice since 2018 it was discovered that sewer lateral inspections are still not being conducted by the Sewer Authority which could result in a liability issue and safety issue. The Municipal Solicitor suggested that he and the Municipal Administrator meet with the Sewer Authority Manager and Sewer Authority Solicitor and report back at the next Council meeting.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Sanders, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to authorize the Municipal Solicitor and the Municipal Administrator to meet with the Sewer Authority Manager and Solicitor and also expedite the first immediate property transfer process by exempting the registration fee and inspection fee for within 60 days of new construction. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Review proposed updates and amendments to Chapter 251 (Building Contractors)

Mr. Singh noted that the definition of the General Building Contractor is broad and the standards for licensing should be updated and categorized as: Residential Contractor (for Single and Duplex dwellings), General Contractor (for Commercial buildings with 3 units or more), and Demolition, with each having their own licensing and insurance requirements.

There was **a motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders**, to approve a draft Amendment and update to Code by the Municipal Solicitor. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Request for Municipal Council to reject a bid in the amount of \$79,375 for demolition of 18 East Chestnut Street

Mr. Singh noted that the property owner is now in the process of having the property rebuilt.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders**, to reject the bid for demolition of 18 East Chestnut Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Adjournment

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Sanders, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo, Clerk of Council