

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022

The Council Meeting of December 6, 2022 was called to order by Council President, Thomas Lepera, at 6:30 PM in the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23, 2 West Lafayette Street, 1st Floor, Norristown, PA 19401.

There was a **Call to Order** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The following members were present:

Rebecca Smith	Tiffani Hendley
Hakim Jones	Dustin Queenan
Rashaad Bates	Thomas Lepera

Also present were:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Lieutenant Michael Bishop, Norristown Police Department; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Richard Lockhart, Norristown Deputy Fire Chief; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Amrinder Singh, Code Manager; Erica Genuardi, Director of Parks and Recreation

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the Minutes from the November 15, 2022 Council Meeting. **Motion passed 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session to discuss personnel and litigation matters.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Norristown Winter Holiday Fair – December 10th 3 to 8 pm, Fair and Carnival and December 11th 1 to 6 pm, Fair and Ice Skating, Airy & Dekalb Streets – rides, games, food trucks, music and much more.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – Mr. Watters commented that he hasn't seen any information about the ARPA funds and the 5-Year Plan in the Times Herald. He also commented to stop the flooding leading to the hospital, stop the damage to Elmwood Park and the Zoo and the issues at James & Hamilton. He added to remove the stormwater pollutants in Stony Creek at the Norristown Dam. He continued that there should be more sprinklers, more paved alleys to stop parking on the mud, make the fish ladders work and a playground on Fornance and Powell.

Tomas Flores, Marshall Street – Mr. Flores had an interpreter. He suggested a coalition for Norristown businesses for Latinos.

FIRE

Resolution 22-78: a Resolution approving the hiring of 2 full-time Municipal Firefighters

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the hiring of 2 full-time Municipal Firefighters. **The motion passed 6-0.**

BUILDING & CODES ENFORCEMENT

Historical Architectural Review Board – November 2022

Mr. Singh noted there was an application submitted for: **1331 Dekalb Street**

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the HARB application which was reviewed and recommended by HARB for November 2022. **The motion passed 6-0.**

POLICE

Resolution 22-79: Motion to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces

Lieutenant Bishop noted that these requests fit the criteria for Disabled Parking Spaces. They are for:

649 Kohn Street 1027 Cherry Street 1106 Green Street

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the Disabled Parking Spaces requests. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-80: Motion to approve the Civil Service Entry Level Police Officer List and grant permission for the Chief of Police to identify and have Offers of Conditional Employment sent to identified candidates on the Entry Level Eligibility List

Lieutenant Bishop said they would like to start the hiring process for new Officers since two Officers will be leaving in January 2023.

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Civil Service Entry Level Police Officer List and grant permission for the Chief of Police to identify and have Offers of Conditional Employment sent to identified candidates on the Entry Level Eligibility List in order to maintain the current budgeted Police Department manpower of 69 Police Officers. **The motion passed 6-0.**

FINANCE

Ordinance 22-06: Appointment of Portnoff as Solicitor for Collection and Fee Schedule

Kathy Pfister explained that the Municipality has retained Portnoff since 2009 and that the rates have increased the first time in five years and they will be included in the Ordinance. She added that this information was advertised in November 2022.

There was a **motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve Ordinance 22-06, approving the appointment of Portnoff as Solicitor, interest assessment and a revised schedule of Attorney and Collection Fees. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-75: 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan

Ms. Pfister noted that this was discussed with Council at the November meeting and that there are no changes.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan (5 Year Plan.) **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-74: 2023 Consolidated Fee Schedule

Ms. Pfister noted the Fee Schedule was discussed with Council at the November meeting and there are no changes to be made.

Councilwoman Hendley shared that she does not agree with the increased ticket rates. She said she sees many trucks parking on the street and in the alley and that these offenders should be monitored. She also suggested revisiting Parking Permits. Municipal Administrator Crandall Jones said that it would be looked into. Councilman Jones suggested that the time period to pay a parking ticket should be increased to 10 days instead of 5 days.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the 2023 Consolidated Fee Schedule and change the time period to pay a parking ticket to 10 days. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Ordinance 22-05: adopting the FY 2023 Budget and establishing the Real Estate Tax Rate for 2023

Ms. Pfister conducted a Power Point with an Overview of the Budget including the 2022 Budget Status and 2023 Budget Considerations which includes using ARPA funds which is recommended to close the Revenue Gap.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to adopt the 2023 Budget Ordinance, increasing the millage rate from 16.0 to 17.0. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Ordinance 22-07: authorizing and directing issuance of General Obligation Debt to finance the renovation of Municipal Hall

Kathy Pfister noted that issuance of new Bonds occurred at the May 18, 2022 Council Meeting. She added that there have been supply chain issues and increased costs. Jennifer, Investment Advisor from Davenport, explained the Bond Sale. She noted that 6 bids were received with the lowest bidder being Robert W. Baird & Company with a 4.08% Interest Rate.

Ms. Laura Kurtz noted that the Bond Ordinance is a 20-page document authorizing a General Obligation Debt of \$710,000 to finance the renovation of Municipal Hall.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve Ordinance 22-07. **The motion passed 6-0.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 22-81: purchase of Builders Risk Insurance policy extension in the amount of \$23,914 from Travelers Property Casualty of America

Crandall Jones explained that 7 more months of coverage is needed due to unforeseen conditions.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Resolution 22-81 to further protect Municipal assets at Municipal Hall with a 7-month extension of the Builders Risk Policy at the recommendation of insurance broker, AIG. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Approval of a Resolution to support a \$500,000 Small Water Grant application to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for the Norristown Municipal Stormwater Authority for various stormwater projects

Crandall Jones explained this is issued by the DCED and that the Stormwater Authority's approval is needed to undertake part of the Capital Improvement Plan by supporting the

application. He also noted that the Municipal match is \$75,000 and they are competing for funds with the Norristown Municipal Waste Authority.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the Small Water Grant application in the maximum amount of \$500,000 for stormwater work in approximately 3 locations in the community. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-82: IGA for Multi-Municipal Recycling Grant totaling \$134,573

Crandall Jones explained that the Municipality of Norristown, West Norriton Township and Conshohocken Borough use Howell Associates to apply for recycling funds, with the Municipality receiving \$63,391 per year. He noted they were told by the State that if all 3 entities apply together, they will receive more money, giving the Municipality an additional \$10,000 per year. Mr. Jones noted that they will submit to get additional funds for beautification efforts.

There was a **motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve Resolution 22-82 for an intergovernmental agreement which includes the Municipality of Norristown, West Norriton Township and Conshohocken Borough for a joint application for a recycling program performance grant in the amount of \$134, 573 which will provide an additional combined total of \$18,757 (\$10,267 for Norristown.) **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-83: Waiver to have Food Trucks on Maris Street on December 10-11, 2022 for the 2022 Norristown Holiday Fair Event

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Resolution 22-83 to allow Food Trucks on Maris Street for the December 10-11, 2022 event. **The motion passed 6-0.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Monthly Updates to Council on the November 2022 activities within presenting Departments: Police, Fire & Code

Code

Mr. Singh reported that 2023 Rental License renewals were sent out to property owners, reminding them that they need to obtain the Norristown Business License in order to obtain the Rental License. He also reported that about 800 Contractor Licenses have been issued under the new Ordinance and that they will send out renewal applications to existing contractors. He added that they have been using third party inspection agencies due to vacancies in the department but they are close to filling a position with 4 positions being open.

Police

Lieutenant Bishop reported there were 676 part 1 crimes. There continues to be stolen vehicles and robberies on the West End. They are using extra patrols and lighting up alleys. He said that shootings increased and an arrest was made in a recent homicide. There is an active promotional process for Captain and Lieutenant. There are 4 to 6 new hires that are Act 120 qualified. He said there are about 60 unhoused people and overdoses are down.

Fire

Chief O'Donnell reported there were 1,230 year-to-date dispatches with an average response time of 4 minutes and 7 seconds, the busiest time being Saturday at 5:00 pm. There were 592 departmental training classes, 7 firefighter injuries, 5 civilian injuries, 0 deaths. There were 854 inspections, 232 public education classes, 13 drills, 262 detectors were provided to 873 homes. There were 7 events at the Safety House.

Council President Lepera brought to everyone's attention that Chief O'Donnell was asked to be part of the Governor's State Advisory Board.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to adjourn the Council meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk of Council