

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 4, 2023

The Council Meeting of April 4, 2023 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 **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The following Council members were in attendance:

Rebecca Smith
Rashaad Bates
Lauren Hughes
Dustin Queenan
Heather Lewis
Thomas Lepera

Also in attendance were:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Acting Chief Michael Bishop, Norristown Police Department; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Richard Lockhart, Deputy Chief/Fire Marshall; Amrinder Singh, Codes Manager; Erica Genardi, Director of Parks & Recreation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the Minutes of the March 21, 2023 Council Workshop. **The motion passed 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Lepera announced that Council did not meet in Executive Session.

PRESENTATION

Presentation by Pamela Martin, Founder/Executive Director of Expressive Path

There was a Power Point presentation which highlighted the history of Expressive Path and the classes offered over the years. Ms. Martin explained that this program is geared toward children ages 12-19 in Middle School to High School. She provided information about the Mentorship Program and some of the projects completed by the students. She said there will be a Summer Camp from July 17-28 at 825 Cherry Street and 2 annual events: "Spring Fling" and "Art in the Park." She added there will be an

Open House on May 18, 2023 from 11 to 1 and that donations of art supplies and music supplies are accepted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

“Restorative Justice” event at the Montgomery County Library on Saturday, April 8th from 9:30 to 4:30.

“Movie Night” at the Carver Center on Wednesday, April 5th. Check website for other events.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – Mr. Watters said there will be a river clean-up on Haws Avenue on April 14th. He suggested implementing the Adaptive Sports program as suggested by Robin Parker, Dragon Boat Club Founder. He wrote an article titled “Shame on You” about aggressive drivers in Norristown. He has questions about a boarded up house that has been that way for years but wondered how he would ask about it since there is a time limit for public comment. He is looking into laws to write regarding de-regulation to make up for the Rail Act. He commented on phone scams that request money and the downed wires on Buttonwood Street.

Vincent DePaul, 201 Swede Street – Mr. DePaul said he runs a “God Feeds” Ministry and a restaurant called “Gangster Vegan.” He is currently renting at 201 Swede Street and gives out free produce. He is asking for support from Council to purchase sinks and other kitchen supplies. He was quoted \$12,000. He said he is looking for resource information. He said his Ministry helps low income and street people in need of nourishment.

Jennifer Choe, 503 Barbados Street – Ms. Choe informed Council of how dark it is on the Airy Street Bridge walkway.

APPOINTMENTS

Resolution 23-24: Appointments to various Boards and Committees

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator, provided the names and term dates for the following Boards and Committees: Civil Service – Alternate Jenna Lyons, term expiring December 31, 2025; Human Relations – Terrence Barnes, term expiring December 31, 2025; Recreation – Mary Krause, term expiring 2027, Cheryl Kehoe-Rogers, term expiring 2026; Keep Norristown Beautiful – Olivia Brady, re-appointment, term expiring December 2024 and Rebecca Smith, term expiring 2024.

POLICE

Resolution 23-22: Request for Council to approve the promotion of Officer Michael Choiniere to Police Corporal

Chief Bishop explained that the vacancy is due to a recent retirement. He noted that Michael Choiniere has been on the SWAT Team in Norristown for 9 years.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the promotion of Officer Michael Choiniere to Police Corporal. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Administration of Oath of Office for Police Corporal Promotion

Judge Margaret Hunsicker administered the swearing-in of Michael Choiniere.

FIRE

Presentation of Unit Award to Firefighters

Firefighters Charles Scott, Kevin Murphy and Andrew McIntyre were involved in a water rescue on January 29, 2023 at Crawford Park where a woman was found face down in the freezing water.

Councilwoman Hughes read the proclamation and presented the Firefighters with the Unit Award. Andrew McIntyre was not present.

Resolution 23-21 of 2023 authorizing the sale of two Fire Department vehicles

Chief O'Donnell explained to Council the need for the sale of the two vehicles to be replaced by a new apparatus arriving shortly.

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 23-21. **The motion passed 6-0.**

BUILDING AND CODES ENFORCEMENT

Historical Architectural Review Board – March 2023

Amrinder Singh, Manager, explained that the following properties applied for HARB approval and are in compliance:

503 Barbados Street

120 Marshall Street

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the applications. **The motion passed 6-0.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Ordinance 23-03: Request of Municipal Council to advertise a Franchise Renewal Agreement with Comcast

Crandall Jones provided the highlight points such as 5% gross receipts, addition of more calculated revenue sources, grant funding agreement. He added that the Franchise Renewal Agreement is 10 years in length with an opportunity to enter into an agreement with a competitor if desired.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates, to approve Ordinance 23-03. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Municipality of Norristown Flex Schedule Pilot Project

Crandall Jones presented a Power Point highlighting the results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey and the benefits and challenges of Flex Time. He said they will start with the Finance Department with 1 day off every other week starting April 10, 2023. He said he will come back before Council after the Pilot Project.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Request Council approval for Intent to Award Construction Contract for Main Street Streetscape Phase IV to Marino Corporation in the amount of \$733,967

Director Jayne Musonye explained this was advertised on March 3rd and 10th of 2023 and six bids were received. She said there is also CDBG funding which is on a time limit.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to award the construction contract to Marino Corporation, located in Skippack, PA, in the amount of \$733,967 for the construction of Phase IV of the Main Streetscape project. **The motion passed 6-0.**

PUBLIC WORKS

Approval of Resolution for Surplus Municipal Property to be offered for Public Auction

Director Thomas Odenigbo explained there are 25 surplus equipment items and vehicles valued greater than \$2,000.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the listing of the surplus items for Public Auction on Municibid's website as required by Municipal Code 4-36. **The motion passed 6-0.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Monthly updates to Council on the March 2023 activities within the presenting Departments: Planning and Recreation

Jayne Musonye provided information about the Economic Development Projects as of April 2023: the State Hospital conveyance was complete and the proposals deadline has been extended. The Baer Building at 118-120 East Main Street has been approved for "Axe-Throwing." The Phasing of Elmwood Park Zoo was approved. Isaac Court at 200 East Logan Street was completed with 5 buildings of 6 rowhomes each. Montgomery County Justice Center is moving along. Phase I of Kennedy-Kenrick is ready to begin. Markley Street Reconstruction Phase II completed. 15 & 17 East Fornance Street offering 2 new houses at \$412,000 each.

Erica Genuardi presented the feedback from the live meetings at Bartash and McCann Parks for park improvements such as ADA compliant, Rock Wall, instruments, Parkour sets, playground surfacing. Ms. Genuardi also provided the pricing information.

Crandall Jones added there will be information regarding additional ARPA funding at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo