

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
JULY 18, 2023

The Council Work Session of July 18, 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
Tiffani Hendley
Dustin Queenan
Lauren Hughes
Heather Lewis
Thomas Lepera

Also in attendance were:

Municipal Administrator, Crandall Jones; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Lt. Nicholas Dumas, Norristown Police Department; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Development; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Amrinder Singh, Codes Manager; Erica Genuardi, Director of Parks and Recreation, Ted Dymtryk, Pennoni Engineering.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the Minutes of the June 20, 2023 Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss litigation and personnel issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Annual "Taste of Norristown" at vonC Brewery on August 19th from 4 pm to 9 pm. There will be a "Best Zep" competition and live music. Vendor space is available.

Movie Nights at Elmwood Park continue on Thursday, July 20th at 8 pm at the Bandshell with the showing of "Encanto." Bring your own chair.

Sunday Night Concerts at Elmwood Park – Sunday, July 23rd at 7 pm features “The Supernaturals.”

“Hire on the Spot” at CADCOM on Wednesday, July 26th from 11 am to 2 pm at 113 East Main Street. There are Amazon delivery opportunities available with bonuses, training and 401-K.

State Rep Matthew Bradford will have a “Paper Shredding” event at Norristown Area High School on Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm.

“Liberty Comic Con” at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks from August 4 through August 6 in Halls D and E.

Free Basketball Skills Workshop at the George Washington Carver Community Center on July 18th from 2 to 4 pm.

“National Night Out” on Tuesday, August 1st from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm on the 500 block of Haws Avenue. Free food, give-aways, music. The Council meeting will be held on August 2nd.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David McMahon, 721 Haws Avenue – Mr. McMahon said that he is forming a committee regarding the homelessness issue. He commented that “AI” is used for high-risk renters and can result in a low score. He said it is already an unfair market. He said he is going through the process because he was evicted with no notice.

Jennie Cho – Ms. Cho said there is drug activity by the Transportation Center and she saw minors buying drugs.

APPOINTMENTS

Resolution 23-51: appointments to various Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

(CUI-23) Request for Conditional Use approval for “The Grand at Main & Dekalb”

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to open the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor, explained that this will be continued until August 2, 2023. He entered the Exhibits which included the advertisement, the application, the Power Point information, the Engineer’s Review Letter from Pennoni and the Montgomery County Planning Commission as well as the Norristown Planning Commission and local Planning agencies’ reviews.

Solicitor Kilkenny asked if anyone present will be asking for a “Party Status?” He provided an explanation. No one asked for this.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve the continuance until August 2, 2023. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Presentation of a proposed development at 1420-1426 Arch Street by All County and Associates

Director Musonye explained that the applicants are here for feedback regarding their proposal for a development at 1420-1426 Arch Street.

Peter Costanzo and Remy Sell presented a Power Point rendering and they provided handouts explaining what is being replaced due to the previous fire. They responded to questions from Council regarding price point, design and parking. The applicant said they will be going before the Zoning Hearing Board for a Variance and they are seeking Relief as part of the Review. Ms. Musonye explained the process they will be going through and said that coming back before Council is part of that process.

Appeal of Zoning Hearing Board decision for Application (6-23) 835-837 Dekalb Street

Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Municipal Development, explained that sometimes an application may have an impact on the neighborhood. She stated that this applicant did not provide the parking required for their Use application so they came before the Zoning Hearing Board and couldn't provide an explanation. The ZHB denied their application and now they are appealing the decision.

Solicitor Kilkenny recommended that this case with the Court of Common Pleas be monitored by Council.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to allow the Solicitor to monitor the case. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Zoning Hearing Board application (29-23) 524 Dekalb Street

Jayne Musonye explained that the Use for this application is a Check Cashing business which she said was taken out of the Town Center Permitted Uses in 2016 so this is against the wishes of Council.

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to send the Solicitor to oppose this application before the Zoning Hearing Board on July 25, 2023. **The motion passed unanimously.**

POLICE

Resolution 23-46: Motion to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces

Lt. Dumas explained that these applicants complied with the requirements. The addresses are:

914 West Airy Street
1057 Swede Street
623 Haws Avenue

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve Resolution 23-46. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 23-47: Request for Council to approve payment to Integrated Security Systems, LLC (ISS)

Lt. Dumas explained that this was previously approved by Council and that tonight is an ask for payment for services.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the payment of \$199,390.00 to Integrated Security Systems for the completion of site work and installation of a wireless network and six (6) camera locations. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 23-48: Request for Council to approve the purchase of nine (9) new TASER Units and related equipment

Lt. Dumas noted that this request has already been approved.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve the purchase of (9) TASER Units and related equipment for \$22,496.40. **The motion passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Municipal Engineer's MS4 Public Update

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator, read the statement regarding the status of the Municipality's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit as required by the DEP. The Municipal Engineer was available to answer questions. Mr. Jones added that the information is also available on the Municipal and Stormwater Authority websites. Municipal Engineer, Ted Dymtryk, noted that PRP (Pollution Reduction Plans) provided a due date of January 23, 2024 for a plan that shows the measures to be met.

Council discussion on whether to proceed with participating in Montgomery County's Shotspotter Grant Program

Crandall Jones advised Council that the District Attorney's office wants a final determination.

Each Council member gave their reason for either their approval or disapproval. Some concerns for disapproval were inaccuracy concerns, data collection measures, non-integration with camera program, not seeing the need for it and better response control. Those in favor said it was a grant opportunity and would like to test it.

There was a **motion by Council President Lepera, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve the 3 year Shotspotter Grant Program. The Roll Call results were:

Rebecca Smith	No
Rashaad Bates	Yes
Tiffany Hendley	Yes

Dustin Queenan	No
Lauren Hughes	No
Heather Lewis	No
Thomas Lepera	Yes

4 votes No - 3 votes Yes. (Council will not proceed with the Shotspotter Grant Program.)

American Rescue Plan Act funding review and discussion

There was a Power Point presentation highlighting the “Businesses & Organization’s ARPA Requests.” These businesses are Theatre Horizon, Montgomery County Library and Blazin’ Body. There was also a discussion regarding the “ARPA Recommendations for Consideration.” These include: offset the General Fund, Blight Remediation, Roosevelt Field purchase, crosswalks, infrastructure repairs, Crawford Retaining Wall, Poley Park additional costs.

Mr. Jones advised Council that they could do something specific or make a Resolution on how to allocate the funding.

He said that he will bring a Budget Total for the items under the Recommendations list to the next meeting.

Resolution 23-49: Request Municipal Council approve a revision to PennDOT’s Traffic Maintenance Agreement (TSMA)

Crandall Jones explained that this is a housekeeping item to show the Municipality’s role versus PennDOT’s role. He said the form needs to be updated.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the revision to PennDOT’s Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement changing the word “Grantee” to “Municipality” and to update the contact information requested in Appendix C. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 23-50: Request Municipal Council approve authorizing the disposal of surplus property

Crandall Jones explained that there are valuable metals and equipment in Building #9 on the grounds of the Norristown State Hospital, including copper piping, and the Municipality will auction these items via GovDeals.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve Resolution 23-50. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 23-52: Request Municipal Council approve authorizing the destruction of eligible Human Resources Records per Commonwealth and Municipal Records Retention Policies

Crandall Jones explained that the records from 2017 and prior of previous personnel are eligible for destruction.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the destruction of the 2017 and prior records of previous personnel. **The motion passed unanimously.**

BUILDING & CODES ENFORCEMENT

Historical Architectural Review Board – June 2023

Amrinder Singh, Building & Codes Manager, provided the addresses that have applied for a HARB review and that have met the requirements of the HARB Ordinance:

500 George Street
17 W. Airy Street
801 W. Marshall Street
1114 W. Marshall Street

There was a **motion by Councilman Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve the HARB applications for the above addresses. **The motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Roseann M. Santangelo