

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 20, 2024

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, February 20, 2024 was called to order by Council Vice President, Dustin Queenan, at 6:30 PM in Council Chambers in Municipal Hall at 235 East Airy Street, Norristown, PA.

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
Lauren Hughes
William McCoy
Dustin Queenan

Also in attendance were:

Municipal Administrator, Crandall Jones; Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor; Police Chief Bailey-Davis; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Amrinder Singh, Codes Manager; Bri'Ana Hawkins, Recreation Director.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve the Minutes of the January 16, 2024 Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council Vice President Queenan announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the Council Meeting to discuss a personnel issue related to Resolution 24-22.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation by Jon A. Leshner, Environmental Planning Assistant Manager, with the Montgomery County Planning Commission

There was a Power Point presentation conducted by Ryan Lamberti, Planner II. The topics covered were "Talking Points," "Climate Change in Montgomery County," "Potential Vulnerability Analysis," "Heat Island Flooding," "Equity – Socio-Economic Risk," "Data Mapping," "Board of Assessment Data."

Mr. Leshar said he is interested in feedback from Council. Crandall Jones asked the Municipality to consider whether they want to support this project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilwoman Smith announced there is a survey on the Municipal website regarding the Skate Park design. She also noted there is a meeting to discuss the Skate Park on February 29, 2024 at 6 pm in Municipal Hall Chambers.

Coaches are needed for “Bitty Basketball” for ages 5-7, Sundays and Mondays at 6 pm, \$50 per child. Register online. Evaluation on April 1st and 8th.

“Spring League” for ages 8-10, 11-13 and 14-16. \$50 per child. Evaluation on April 2nd and 3rd and April 9th and 10th. League dates: April 29th and June 4th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cynthia Smith, 851 George Street, Norristown – She said that the homeless encampment in her area is out of hand. She said she doesn’t feel safe and it is not fair to the residents or children. She said they need help.

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street, Norristown – He said that concerning Keep Norristown Beautiful, he gave a book to the Norristown School Board listing the blighted properties but has not heard back. He said he found an old Attorney General book which may contain something to show where the money went.

Jane Pekol, 726 East Marshall Street, Norristown – She said she would like more information about the sale of the Norristown State Hospital and the final price. She asked if the taxpayers were paid and also asked how the money is being spent.

Mirna Tellez, 873 Cherry Street, Norristown – She said that she and 19 others sell items from their homes to show their culture but said they are being taken to court due to their business.

Catalina Escobedo, 748 Roosevelt Avenue, Norristown – She came for the same reason saying that they are working hard for their friends.

Xittaly Escobedo, 748 Roosevelt Avenue, Norristown – She said they sell things to have a better future and would like Council to help them.

Denisse, 748 Roosevelt Avenue, Norristown – She is the Director on Marshall Street that helps with businesses for 3 years. She said she has a problem with being sued by the Municipality. She invited everyone to their next Flea Market.

Solicitor Hitchens explained that the \$12,000 is a standard Zoning enforcement amount for which the property owner can appeal. He said that their Use is not permitted. He said that if they appeal and the Judge decides in their favor, they can ask the Zoning Hearing Board for the Use they need to conduct their business.

APPOINTMENTS

Resolution 24-17: Motion to hire Shane Quinnan as Career Firefighter to fill a vacancy within the Norristown Fire Department

There was a swearing-in conducted by Council Vice President Queenan.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 24-17 to hire Shane Quinnan. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-22: To appoint Thomas O'Donnell as Interim City Administrator, effective Friday, February 23, 2024

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to appoint Thomas O'Donnell as Interim City Administrator. The Roll Call Vote results were:

Rebecca Smith	yes
Rashaad Bates	yes
Tiffani Hendley	no
William McCoy	yes
Lauren Hughes	yes
Dustin Queenan	no

The motion passed 4-2.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Resolution 24-19: Awarding a contract to Triad Advisory Services, Inc. in the amount of \$25,950 for the 5-year 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and 2025 Action Plan

There was a Power Point presentation related to the Request for Proposed Summary. The topics covered were the Firm, Qualifications, Cost & Time Schedule, References and Comments.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-19 to award a contract in compliance with Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 4-35(A)(6) of the Administrative Code which states, "All contracts in excess of \$21,000 shall be in writing and shall be awarded by Municipal Council and the contract shall be executed by the Municipal Administrator." **The motion passed 6-0.**

Presentation of the Feasibility Study for 1 West Main Street Food Hall Concept Plan

Director Musonye noted that the Study was completed and they are here to update Council.

Ryan Berlinsky and Stefanie Arigonello conducted a Power Point covering topics such as, "Trends in the Movement," "Food Hall Design," "Organizational Structure," "Financial Model Summary," "Municipal Tax Benefits."

Zoning Hearing Board Application (8-24) for 611 West Marshall Street

Director Musonye provided a history of the property's Zoning changes. The applicant is currently asking for feedback from Council regarding their Special Exception for 3 apartments from the original 5 rooms.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to send the Solicitor to voice Council's support for the Zoning Hearing Board Application (8-24) for 611 West Marshall Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

FINANCE

Resolution 24-18: Request of Council to approve the 2024 Updated Consolidated Fee Schedule

Director Kathy Pfister explained that there is a Municipality-owned parking lot on Lafayette Street that someone wants to rent for \$25 per space per month. She noted that this must be added to the Consolidated Fee Schedule in order to rent it.

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve Resolution 24-18 to approve the 2024 Updated Consolidated Fee Schedule. **The motion passed 6-0.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 24-20: Requesting Municipal Council to approve a Change Order in the amount of \$61,200 to Gordon H. Baver for shoring at Municipal Hall

Crandall Jones stated that the \$61,200 covers the cost of scaffolding and materials.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 24-20 for labor and materials to complete additional shoring required to secure the integrity of Municipal Hall renovations on the ground floor, at an additional cost of \$61,200. Costs are detailed on Gordon H. Baver's Change Order Number X-125-RV. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-21: Council ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO District Council 88, Local 317 and the Municipality of Norristown

Crandall Jones noted that the AFSCME agreed to the details of the terms. He said this is one of 5 Labor Agreements with the Municipality.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve the ratification of the Labor Agreement effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2027. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-24: Motion of Council on an Agreement of Purchase of Roosevelt Field from the Norristown Area School District for Municipal recreation purposes

Crandall Jones noted that a fair and reasonable price was agreed on. The amount is \$450,000.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Agreement of Purchase of Roosevelt Field for \$450,000. **The motion passed 6-0.**

PARKS AND RECREATION

Resolution 24-23: Zambelli Fireworks for the Fourth of July celebration at Elmwood Park in the amount of \$24,900.00

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-23 for the Zambelli Fireworks for the Fourth of July celebration. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Recreation Department Update to Council

Bri-Ana Hawkins noted what positions are in the Recreation Department noting that there is an opening for the Recreation Manager. The positions are Director of Recreation, Recreation Manager, Project Specialist, Camp Specialist, Part-time Evening Supervisor, Part-time Media Relations and a Recreation Aide.

She conducted a Power Point regarding the programs and the facility which includes a newly designed Game Room.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo